

THE LAW  
IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL

# SUPPLEMENTS TO NOVUM TESTAMENTUM

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VOLUME XLII



LEIDEN  
E. J. BRILL  
1975



# THE LAW IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL

THE TORAH AND THE GOSPEL  
MOSES AND JESUS, JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY  
ACCORDING TO JOHN

BY

SEVERINO PANCARO



LEIDEN  
E. J. BRILL  
1975

ISBN 90 04 04309 8

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PRINTED IN BELGIUM

*TO MY PARENTS*



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## PREFACE

The present work is an abridged version of a doctoral Dissertation, submitted to the Theological Faculty of the University of Münster in February, 1972, and accepted in June, 1972. Literature which appeared after 1971 could be taken into consideration only exceptionally.

Prof. J. Gnilka directed my investigations and gave me the benefit of his understanding and friendship. I am greatly indebted to him. I should also like to mention the great debt I owe to my good friends, Pfarrer Wilhelm Rombold and Prof. David Roy, as well as to my former teachers, Prof. K. H. Schelkle and Prof. I. de la Potterie.

I also wish to express my gratitude to the Most Rev. Alexander Carter, D.D., for having allowed and encouraged me to pursue my studies in the New Testament, to Prof. W. C. van Unnik and to the Editors of *Supplements to Novum Testamentum* for having accepted to publish my work in their Series.

Mrs. Anne Scarfone typed the entire manuscript, helped with the proofreading, and prepared the Indexes. I cannot thank her sufficiently for her dedication and competence.

The book has been published with the help of a grant from the Humanities Research Council of Canada, using funds provided by the Canada Council, and of a grant from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie.

SEVERINO PANCARO

Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario  
July 14, 1975



## ABBREVIATIONS

### THE BIBLE

|                         |                   |            |            |
|-------------------------|-------------------|------------|------------|
| Gen                     | 1, 2 Chron        | Cant       | Am         |
| Ex                      | Esd (LXX = 2 Esd) | Wisd       | Obad       |
| Lev                     | Neh (LXX = 2 Esd) | Sir        | Jon        |
| Num                     | Tob               | Is         | Mic        |
| Dt                      | Jud               | Jer        | Nah        |
| Jos                     | Est               | Lam        | Hab        |
| Judg                    | Job               | Ez         | Zeph       |
| Ruth                    | Ps                | Dan        | Hag        |
| 1, 2 Sam (LXX = 1, 2 K) | Prov              | Hos        | Zech       |
| 1, 2 K (LXX = 3, 4 K)   | Eccl              | Joel       | Mal        |
|                         |                   |            | 1, 2 Macc  |
| Mt                      | Rom               | Col        | Jas        |
| Mk                      | 1, 2 Cor          | 1, 2 Thess | 1, 2 Pt    |
| Lk                      | Gal               | 1, 2 Tim   | 1, 2, 3 Jn |
| Jn                      | Eph               | Philem     | Jude       |
| Act                     | Phil              | Heb        | Apoc       |

### NON-CANONICAL WRITINGS

|            |                               |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| Ap Abr     | Apocalypse of Abraham         |
| Ass Mos    | Assumption of Moses           |
| 2 Bar      | Apocalypse of Baruch (Syriac) |
| Ep Barn    | Epistle of Barnabas           |
| 1 Esd      | 1 Esdras                      |
| 4 Esd      | 4 Esdras                      |
| eth Hen    | Ethiopic Henoch               |
| Hen        | Henoch (Greek)                |
| Jub        | Jubilees                      |
| 3 Macc     | 3 Maccabees                   |
| 4 Macc     | 4 Maccabees                   |
| Orac Sybil | Oracula Sybillina             |
| Ps Sol     | Psalms of Solomon             |

### QUMRAN

|      |                          |
|------|--------------------------|
| 1QS  | Community Rule           |
| 1QSa | Rule of the Congregation |
| 1QSB | Blessings                |
| CD   | Damascus Rule            |
| 1QH  | Hymns                    |

|         |                        |
|---------|------------------------|
| 1QM     | War Rule               |
| 1QpH    | Commentary on Habakkuk |
| 1 Q 29  | Fragments              |
| 4QFl    | Florilegium            |
| 4QpPs37 | Commentary on Ps 37    |

THE TESTAMENTS OF THE TWELVE PATRIARCHS  
(= TEST XII)

|        |          |          |           |
|--------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Test A | Aser     | Test Jud | Judah     |
| B      | Benjamin | L        | Levi      |
| D      | Dan      | N        | Naphthali |
| G      | Gad      | R        | Ruben     |
| Iss    | Issachar | S        | Simeon    |
| Jos    | Joseph   | Z        | Zabulon   |

RABBINICAL WRITINGS

Our abbreviations are the customary ones (cf. Str.-Bill., Vol. 5-6, 99-101). Thus, for example :

|          |                               |
|----------|-------------------------------|
| Sanh     | Mishnah Sanhedrin             |
| b Sanh   | Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin  |
| Tos Sanh | Tosephta, Sanhedrin           |
| p Sanh   | Palestinian Talmud, Sanhedrin |
| Gen R    | Genesis Rabba                 |
| Mek Ex   | Mekhilta Exodus               |
| S Dt     | Sifre Deuteronomy             |

PERIODICALS

|                       |                                          |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Bib                   | Biblica                                  |
| BibOr                 | Bibbia e Oriente                         |
| BiViChr               | Bible et Vie Chrétienne                  |
| BJRyL                 | The Bulletin of the John Rylands Library |
| BZ                    | Biblische Zeitschrift                    |
| CBQ                   | Catholic Biblical Quarterly              |
| ConcThMonth           | Concordia Theological Monthly            |
| EstB                  | Estudios Biblicos                        |
| EvTheol               | Evangelische Theologie                   |
| ExpTim                | The Expository Times                     |
| GerefTheolTijdschrift | Gereformeerd Theologisch Tijdschrift     |
| HarvTR                | The Harvard Theological Review           |
| HebUnCollAnn          | Hebrew Union College Annual              |
| HeythJour             | Heythrop Journal                         |
| Interpr               | Interpretation                           |
| JBL                   | Journal of Biblical Literature           |
| JourJewStud           | The Journal of Jewish Studies            |
| JTS                   | Journal of Theological Studies           |

|           |                                                    |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Jud       | Judaica                                            |
| NovT      | Novum Testamentum                                  |
| NRT       | Nouvelle Revue Théologique                         |
| NTS       | New Testament Studies                              |
| RB        | Revue Biblique                                     |
| RHPR      | Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuse      |
| RQ        | Revue de Qumran                                    |
| RSPT      | Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques  |
| RSR       | Recherches de Science Religieuse                   |
| RTPhil    | Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie               |
| ScE       | Sciences Ecclésiastiques                           |
| StudTheol | Studia Theologica                                  |
| ThLZ      | Theologische Literaturzeitung                      |
| ThR       | Theologische Rundschau                             |
| TS        | Theological Studies                                |
| TSKrit    | Theologische Studien und Kritiken                  |
| VD        | Verbum Domini                                      |
| VigChrist | Vigiliae Christianae                               |
| VoxTheol  | Vox Theologica                                     |
| VT        | Vetus Testamentum                                  |
| ZAW       | Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft |
| ZKT       | Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie              |
| ZNW       | Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft |
| ZSyTh     | Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie            |
| ZThK      | Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche               |

## ABBREVIATED WORKS AND COLLECTIONS

|                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ATD               | Das Alte Testament Deutsch (Göttingen, 1949ff)                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| BAG               | Arndt, W. F., and Gingrich, F. W., A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. A translation and adaption of W. Bauer's Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch (Cambridge-Chicago, 8 <sup>1964</sup> ) |
| Bib de Jér        | Bible de Jérusalem                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Blass-Deb.        | Blass, F., and Debrunner, A., Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch (Göttingen, 12 <sup>1965</sup> )                                                                                                                             |
| CC                | Corpus Christianorum                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| CSCO              | Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| CSEL              | Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| DBS               | Dictionnaire de la Bible, Supplément, ed. L. Pirot et al (Paris, 1928ff)                                                                                                                                                               |
| EKK               | Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| GCS               | Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte                                                                                                                                                              |
| Hatch and Redpath | Hatch, E., and Redpath, H. A., A Concordance to the Septuagint, (r.p. Graz, 1954)                                                                                                                                                      |
| ICC               | The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament                                                                                                                                              |

|              |                                                                                                                           |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mandelkern   | Mandelkern, S., <i>Veteris Testamenti Concordantiae Hebraicae atque Chaldaicae</i> , 2 Vols. (Graz, <sup>2</sup> 1955)    |
| Morgenthaler | Morgenthaler, R., <i>Statistik des neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes</i> (Zürich-Frankfurt, 1958)                           |
| PG           | <i>Patrologia Graeca</i>                                                                                                  |
| PL           | <i>Patrologia Latina</i>                                                                                                  |
| RGG          | <i>Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i>                                                                               |
| Str.-Bill.   | Strack, H. L. - Billerbeck, P., <i>Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch</i> (München, <sup>5</sup> 1969) |
| TWNT         | <i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</i> , ed. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich (Stuttgart, 1933ff)                  |

## OTHER ABBREVIATIONS

The Commentaries have been referred to by using the name of the author, followed by a reference either to the passage in question (e.g., ad Jn 7,19; ad loc.) or, where it seemed opportune, to the page in question (e.g., Bultmann, 212).

The titles of articles and books have been quoted in full only when referred to for the first time. Thereafter, they have been referred to in an abbreviated form (e.g., *op. cit.*, *art. cit.*) or through the use of the author's name (e.g., Moore, *Judaism*; Eichrodt, *Theol.*; Grether). When more than one article or book of the same author was quoted, a clarifying reference was added (e.g., Dodd, *art. cit.*, RHPR 37 (1958) 5-17; de la Potterie, *Alētheia*).

The self-evident and commonly used abbreviations (e.g., *art. cit.*, *op. cit.*) are omitted from this list—except for a few which might be difficult to individuate.

|           |                          |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| AV        | Authorized Version       |
| ch., chs. | chapter, chapters        |
| Comm.     | Commentary               |
| comp.     | compare                  |
| ed.       | edited by                |
| esp.      | especially               |
| Heb.      | Hebrew                   |
| impf.     | imperfect                |
| impt.     | imperative               |
| l.v.      | lectio varia             |
| LXX       | Septuagint               |
| MS, MSS   | manuscript, manuscripts  |
| MT        | Masoretic Text           |
| n., nn.   | note, notes              |
| Par       | Parallels (Synoptics)    |
| r.p.      | reprint                  |
| RSV       | Revised Standard Version |
| v., vv.   | verse, verses            |
| v.g.      | verbi gratia             |
| vs.       | contra, against          |
| Vulg.     | Vulgate                  |
| x         | times (2x = two times)   |

## ANCIENT COMMENTARIES

- Alcuinus in *PL* 100, 734-1008  
Augustine, *In Johannis evangelium tractatus* CXXIV, *CC* 36 (Turnhout, 1954)  
Beda Ven. in *PL* 92, 633-938  
Chrysostom, John, 88 *Hom. in Jo.*, *PG* 59, 23-482  
Cyril of Alex. in *PG* 73 and 74  
Euthymius Zig. in *PG* 129, 1105-1502  
Maldonatus, *Comm. in quattuor ev.*, ed. J. M. Raich II (Mainz, 1874)  
Nonnus Pan., *Paraph. in Jo.*, *PG* 43, 749-920  
Origen (Fragments) in *GCS* IV, 1-480, ed. E. Preuschen  
Rupertus (Rupert von Deutz) in *PL* 169, 203-826  
Scholia Vetera in *PG* 106  
Scotus Erigena in *PL* 122, 283-348  
Theodore Mops. in *CSCO* 115 and 116  
Theophylact in *PG* 123, 1127 - 124, 318  
Thomas Aq., *Super evangelium s. Ioannis Lectura*, ed. R. Cai (Torino-Roma, <sup>5</sup>1952)





## INTRODUCTION

It was the merit of E. Hirsch to have pointed out that the relationship of Jesus to the Law is one of the governing ideas of the Fourth Gospel.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, this author equated the Johannine conception of the Law with that of Paul, laying himself open to severe and justified criticism. Yet, in the decades which have passed since Hirsch's publication, no one has consecrated a thorough study to the Law as it presents itself in John's Gospel. The fact that Hirsch's basic assumption might have been correct, even though his interpretation was erroneous, was completely overlooked.

Apart from the Dissertation of D. Schirmer<sup>2</sup> which is merely a comparative study between Jewish legislative procedure as reflected in Jn and in the Rabbinical writings, no monograph has been devoted to the Law in St. John's Gospel. A Dissertation by F. Gschwend<sup>3</sup> has appeared on the topic, but has not been published and was not available to the writer.

The present Dissertation wishes to fill a gap which is all the more noticeable because of the many studies devoted to the Pauline notion of the Law. Since it is generally admitted that the Pauline and Johannine views differ on this point, it seemed most appropriate to attempt to determine the meaning and function given to the Law by Jn and the precise role it plays in the theological structure of his Gospel.

The confrontation between Jesus and the Jews unfolds itself in Jn as an impressive juridical trial and, within this dramatic framework, the Law appears as a hermeneutical key to much Jn has to say concerning the person of Jesus and his "work". The role and function of the Law is best perceived *within* this framework and it is this consideration which has determined the structure of our investigation.

*Nóμος* is used by Jn in the most comprehensive sense. It is co-

---

<sup>1</sup> E. Hirsch, *Das vierte Evangelium in seiner ursprünglichen Gestalt verdeutscht und erklärt* (Tübingen, 1936).

<sup>2</sup> D. Schirmer, *Rechtsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Johannesevangelium*, Diss. Erlangen (Berlin, 1964).

<sup>3</sup> F. Gschwend, *Jésus et la loi dans l'Évangile de S. Jean* (Diss. Faculté théol. de l'Église libre neuchâteloise, 1942).

extensive with the meaning given to *תורה* in the Jewish tradition. When the English word "Law" is used to render *תורה*, it suffers from the same deficiencies as the Greek *νόμος*. Yet there is no better English equivalent. As used in this study, "Law" should therefore not be restricted to the legislative part of the Torah nor to the legal aspect of the Torah, even though this meaning is very much present at times and never completely absent.<sup>4</sup>

Attention was paid to the Jewish background (the OT, the Apocrypha, Qumran and the Rabbinical writings) during the course of our whole investigation. This procedure appeared not only justified, but necessary. The Law in Jn is the Torah—an exclusively Jewish category—and it is only against the background of the Jewish tradition that the Johannine presentation of the Law and of all which is immediately related to it becomes fully intelligible. Nevertheless, our primary concern was the Fourth Gospel itself and, if the Jewish tradition was referred to, it was not the main object of investigation. As far as the Johannine view of the Law is concerned, we found that the Gospel is self-explanatory, although it is at times most helpful to cast a glance at the tradition from which it evolved. It may come as a surprise that more attention has been paid to the Jewish writings than to the remaining Johannine literature, which did not receive much consideration. The reasons for this have been exposed in the course of our study.<sup>5</sup>

The Johannine "theology" of the Law, as we have understood it, is well defined and consistently worked out, even though the Gospel was no doubt the end-result of a long process of evolution. This factor was not disregarded. At times it was necessary to try to determine the material Jn received from tradition in order better to understand his intention, but we found that, whatever the history of the Fourth Gospel, it presents a view of the Law which is neither contradictory nor inconsistent. Consequently, the questions of "Traditionsgeschichte" and "Redaktionsgeschichte" do not occupy a significant place in our investigation.

In this connection, it is necessary to point out that we have used the terms "Jn" and "the evangelist" indiscriminately to refer both to the Fourth Gospel and to its author. This does not imply that everything in the Fourth Gospel comes from the same hand nor do we

<sup>4</sup> See below, pp. 432-435 and esp. 432, n. 9; 514ff.

<sup>5</sup> See below, pp. 250-253.

thereby wish to make any affirmation concerning the identity of the author. It does mean that we wish to speak of the Fourth Gospel as being a unified whole and of an author who has made it such.

Notwithstanding a growing appreciation for the Jewish character of the Fourth Gospel, many continue to interpret it almost exclusively in the light of Gnosticism and Hellenistic thought. It is hoped that the present monograph not only casts new light on the role of the Law in Jn, but succeeds in establishing its Jewish character more convincingly than the attempts made to date.



## PART ONE

THE LAW AS A NORM WHICH THE JEWS  
VAINLY TRY TO USE AGAINST JESUS IN  
ORDER TO JUDGE AND CONDEMN HIM



In a suggestive article,<sup>1</sup> Th. Preiss pointed out the importance of the juridical aspect in the Gospel of St. John. The "cosmic trial" between God and the world, which has Jesus, the Son of Man, as its central figure, is a basic theme of the Gospel. There are two sides to this trial. Jesus is, on the one hand, the one who, by his presence and activity, provokes a discrimination or separation among men and brings about a judgement: the salvation of those who accept him, the condemnation of those who reject him. Jesus, on the other hand, is also the one who is accused and judged by the Jews (world) and ultimately—though unjustly—condemned. The first aspect (Jesus' *κρίνειν*) has been analyzed in detail by J. Blank,<sup>2</sup> but this author has almost neglected the second aspect: the judgement of Jesus by the Jews.<sup>3</sup> He has especially failed to bring out the fact that the judgement of Jesus by the Jews is connected with the Law (Torah).<sup>4</sup> It is to the use of the Law made by the Jews in trying to secure Jesus' condemnation that we first wish to turn our attention.

The Jews attempt to convict Jesus on four charges which are intimately interrelated:

- 1) he is a violator of the Sabbath, of the Law—a "sinner" (Jn 5,1-18; Jn 9; Jn 9,16.24);
- 2) he is a blasphemer (Jn 5,17-18; Jn 8,58; Jn 10,24-38);
- 3) he is a false teacher who leads the people astray (Jn 7,14-18; Jn 7,45-49; Jn 9,24-34; Jn 18,19-24);
- 4) he is an enemy of the Jewish nation (Jn 11,47-53).

Behind each of these charges, in the mind of the evangelist, stands the Jewish misunderstanding of the Law (and of Jesus). It is the Law

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<sup>1</sup> "La justification dans la pensée johannique", in: *Hommage de reconnaissance K. Barth* (Neuchâtel, 1946), 100-118.

<sup>2</sup> *Krisis. Untersuchungen zur johanneischen Christologie und Eschatologie* (Freiburg i. Br., 1964).

<sup>3</sup> The author has devoted only a few pages (42-52) to this side of the question. As for Preiss (*art. cit.*, 104), he writes: "L'aspect juridique de la pensée johannique ne sera ... pas centré sur le problème de la loi".

<sup>4</sup> The phrase: *κατὰ τὸν νόμον ὑμῶν κρίνατε αὐτόν* (Jn 18,31) summarizes what the Jews vainly seek to do throughout the Gospel. The *κρίνειν* of the Jews (7,24.51; 8,15; 18,31) is always connected with the Law, as we shall see.

which, in the eyes of the Jews, demands the condemnation of Jesus as a "sinner" (violation of the Sabbath Law), a blasphemer, a false teacher, an enemy of the nation. The four charges are related not only because the Law stands behind each and every one of them, but also because they may, ultimately, be reduced to one: the claim (made by Jesus and Christians) that Jesus is the Son of God (Jn 19,7 !). The two issues (the Law—Jesus, Son of God) are inseparable. Jn has reduced the opposition between the Church and the Synagogue (Christianity and Judaism) to a confrontation between the Law and Jesus (Son of God).

The four chapters of Part One investigate, successively, each of the four charges. It is the "case" the Jews (orthodox Judaism) present against Jesus—undermined from the very beginning by the evangelist, who has another view of the Law (derived from faith in Jesus as the Son of God) and who builds up a "case" against the Jews in his very presentation of the "case" the Jews vainly try to establish against Jesus.



## CHAPTER ONE

### THE SABBATH QUESTION. DOES JESUS VIOLATE THE LAW BY WORKING ON THE SABBATH ?

Prior to the account of the first σημεῖον worked by Jesus on the Sabbath, there is no direct confrontation between Jesus and the Jews on the issue of the Law.<sup>1</sup> It is the healing of the paralytic in Jn 5 which gives rise to the confrontation. The issue at stake is the observance of the Sabbath and, indirectly, that of the Law in general. In chapter 5 the evangelist limits himself to pointing out that the apparent violation of the Sabbath by Jesus is at the origin of his being persecuted by the Jews (Jn 5,16). Jesus offers an elaborate and highly theological defence of his activity (Jn 5,17.19-29), but the intent of the Jews to convict Jesus for transgressing the Law is only implied.

What is merely foreshadowed in Jn 5,1-18 is given very brief development in Jn 7,21-24,<sup>2</sup> but the full dramatic development of the conflict is reserved for chapter 9. It takes on the form of a regular judicial hearing which follows upon the only other Sabbath healing reported in the Fourth Gospel. Jesus is accused of being a ἀμαρτωλός. Special attention will be paid to this term—it indicates that the Pharisees consider Jesus one who is opposed to the Law.

When Jn 5,1-18 and Jn 9 are viewed together, it becomes evident that the evangelist is giving dramatic illustration to an attempt of the Jews to judge (condemn) Jesus as a violator of the Law, using the Law to secure his conviction and condemnation.

#### 1. THE HEALING OF THE PARALYTIC—Jn 5,1-18

Some scholars<sup>3</sup> hold that the healings of the paralytic and of the

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<sup>1</sup> The confrontation is already foreshadowed at Jn 2,13-20 (which is "programmatic") and at Jn 4,1, but the question of the Law is not raised nor are the Jews said to oppose Jesus on the question of the Law.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter Six, pp. 158ff.

<sup>3</sup> On Jn 5,1-14 cf. especially: E. Haenchen, "Johanneische Probleme", *ZThK* 56 (1959) 1-54, 46-50. Further C. H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge, 1965), 174-180; R. Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (Göttingen, 1964), 177. On Jn 9,1-7, cf. Bultmann, 250; Dodd, *op. cit.*, 181-188.

man born blind are narratives which were not composed by the evangelist but which came down to him from tradition. We believe that there is much to be said for this possibility and that it casts considerable light on the purpose the evangelist was pursuing when he incorporated the narratives into his Gospel.

Both in examining Jn 5,1-18 and Jn 9 we will begin by attempting to determine the traditional material and then pass on to examine the use Jn made of it.

#### A) *The traditional pericope—Jn 5,1-9a,b.14*

Jn 5,1-9a,b.14 presents itself as a healing story which is cast in a traditional form and may well have come down to the evangelist more or less as it now stands.<sup>4</sup>

The *setting* (vv. 1-4) is unusually long and elaborate, even when one omits vv. 3b-4 as a later interpolation.<sup>5</sup> Yet, vv. 2-3a, in some form or other, must have belonged to the original narrative.<sup>6</sup> The general pattern of the *healing story proper* (vv. 5-9a,b.14) follows that which we find in several Synoptic healing stories.<sup>7</sup> There is thus every reason to believe that both the story and its setting came down to Jn substantially as they now stand.<sup>8</sup>

The conclusion receives invaluable confirmation from the nature and content of vv. 9c-13. With v. 9c the story takes on a new turn.

<sup>4</sup> The following analysis is based on the studies of Haenchen (*art. cit.*, 46-50); Dodd (*op. cit.*, 174-180) and R. T. Fortna (*The Gospel of Signs* (Cambridge, 1970), 48-54).

<sup>5</sup> Verses 3b.4 are omitted by the best witnesses. There is no doubt that they do not belong to the original text.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Dodd, *op. cit.*, 179f; 244ff.

<sup>7</sup> The similarities are well analyzed by Dodd (*op. cit.*, 174-180). In our opinion, however, the question in v. 6 brings out the hopeless situation of the paralytic (rightly Bultmann, 180f; Haenchen, *art. cit.*, 48), not his will to be healed and his faith (Dodd); the command of Jesus in v. 8 is not a "further challenge" to test the faith of the man (Dodd), but the all-powerful words of Jesus which effect what they command. The absolute helplessness of the patient makes the initiative and power of Jesus stand out all the more (cf. Mk 1,30f; Lk 13,21f—Jesus takes the initiative and the faith of the sick person is passed under silence). Loisy (*Le quatrième Évangile* (Paris, 1903), 391) is no doubt right in insisting that "le miracle s'opère si rapidement qu'il n'y a pas lieu d'analyser les impressions de celui qui en est l'objet, ni de placer sa foi à la parole de Jésus comme intermédiaire entre cette parole et la guérison".

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Fortna (*op. cit.*, 54) for a reconstruction of the traditional story, which he attributes to the "Source" Jn was using.

The Sabbath question is introduced *post factum* (a procedure we will also find in chapter 9) and gives way to the dialogue contained in vv. 10-13. That this detail is not mentioned at the outset of the story, as it is in the Synoptics, but as an afterthought, has led Bultmann, Dodd and Haenchen to conclude that the preceding story was a traditional piece and was not composed by Jn.<sup>9</sup> There is no denying that v. 9c is a rather artificial suture<sup>10</sup> and serves to introduce a dialogue concerning the Sabbath which is itself rather adventitious in character.<sup>11</sup> If vv. 9c-13 are removed, the story does not suffer and v. 14<sup>12</sup> follows very well upon v. 9a,b. According to Haenchen, v. 14 represents the conclusion of the pericope the evangelist received from tradition.<sup>13</sup> This opinion seems very plausible.<sup>14</sup> To the points already mentioned and which speak in its favour, we can add that there are many instances in the Synoptic healing stories where the recovery (viz., the forgiving word or healing word of Jesus) is followed by a command.<sup>15</sup> The conclusion of the "pericopa de adultera" (Jn 8,11) offers a striking analogy from the Fourth Gospel itself.<sup>16</sup>

If Haenchen's hypothesis is correct, it should be possible to detect the original meaning of the traditional healing story (5,1-9a,b,14).<sup>17</sup>

<sup>9</sup> "John did not compose the story freely as an introduction to the dialogue; if he had done so, we should have expected something which would more naturally suggest its main theme". Dodd, *op. cit.*, 178.

<sup>10</sup> The artificiality of the suture is pointed out by Dodd, *op. cit.*, 178.

<sup>11</sup> The adventitious nature of the dialogue had already been noticed by Loisy (393). Cf. p. 13, n. 24.

<sup>12</sup> In its present form, v. 14 has been retouched by Jn. It probably read: *καὶ ὁ (Ἰησοῦς) εἶπεν αὐτῷ (ἰδε ὕγιος γέγονας ?) μηκέτι ἀμαρτάνε, ἵνα μὴ χεῖρόν σοί τι γένηται*. Cf. Fortna, *op. cit.*, 53 and n. 4, who follows Haenchen.

<sup>13</sup> *Art. cit.*, 48f: "Das dürfte das auf v. 9a,b folgende ursprüngliche Ende der judenchristlichen Heilungsgeschichte sein, die der Evangelist verwertet hat". Dodd (*op. cit.*, loc. cit.) has neglected v. 14 completely.

<sup>14</sup> It is also adopted by Fortna, *op. cit.*, 53.

<sup>15</sup> Abstracting from the cases in which Jesus commands the healed to be silent about the miracle (messianic secret), we have: Mk 1,40, Par; Mk 5,19 = Lk 8,39; Mk 8,26. There is also the expression: "Your faith has saved you, go in peace", pronounced after the forgiveness of sins (Lk 7,50) or after a healing (Lk 8,48; 17,19).

<sup>16</sup> In this passage, added at a later date, Jesus' forgiving attitude is followed by the admonition: "Go, and do not sin again".

<sup>17</sup> Brown (*The Gospel according to John*, I (New York, 1966), 210) does not accept Haenchen's thesis because, for him, the story would have no meaning if vv. 9c-13 were left out. He claims that: a) the will to be healed is not the point of the story—the paralytic shows everything but that; b) faith is absent (vs. Jn 9); c) Jesus' pity, which is often the point of healing stories in the Synoptics, is here given no prominence. The

Such is indeed the case. If vv. 9c-13 are omitted, there is a point to the story and it is indeed quite clear: the forgiveness of sins or, better still, the gift of life<sup>18</sup> which implies the forgiveness of sins.<sup>19</sup> This is exactly the point of the healing of the paralytic in Mk 2,1-11—the Sabbath question is absent!<sup>20</sup> If v. 14 was the conclusion of the traditional pericope, it seems obvious that what is reflected here is the traditional doctrine which links physical infirmity to sin.<sup>21</sup> The healing presupposes (is?) the remission of sin of which the sickness is a result (which is the sickness?).

B) *The interest of the traditional pericope for Jn and his use of it*

From tradition Jn received a healing pericope which offered interesting possibilities. The gift of new (physical) life (vv. 5-9a,b) which signified and contained the idea of the forgiveness of sins (v. 14) pointed to *Jesus as the giver of life*. This theme (which is one of the major themes of the Fourth Gospel) was of great interest to Jn, as can be gathered from the use he made of it in the following verses. The *ἐγείρε* of v. 8 is taken up by the *ἐγείρειν* and *ζωοποιεῖν* of v. 21

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Sabbath question is consequently the only true point of the narrative. Brown does admit, however, that vv. 9c-13 may be a Johannine expansion of the Sabbath motive.

<sup>18</sup> Brown's title for Jn 5,1-15!

<sup>19</sup> Haenchen (*art. cit.*) has failed to give this point sufficient consideration. It is strange that Brown sees no point in vv. 1-9b.14 and yet writes (218): "In vs. 21 the first of these works is mentioned: Jesus grants life ... The connection between the healing of the cripple at Bethesda and the order to stop sinning (vs. 14) becomes clearer. To those who are in the realm of death which is sin the Son has the power to grant life, and the only threat to the life that he grants is further sin". It is true that v. 21 makes this "clearer", but the point is already found quite clearly in vv. 1-9b.14!

<sup>20</sup> This does not imply that there is literary contact between Jn 9,1-9b.14 and Mk 2,1-11 (cf. Bultmann, 177; Dodd, *op. cit.*, 179). The piece could have come down to Jn through an independent tradition (as Haenchen, *art. cit.*, holds). This would better explain the divergences: roof—pool; Capernaum—Jerusalem, etc.

<sup>21</sup> If Jn 5,1-9b.14 came down to Jn basically as it now stands, a further difficulty is removed. V. 14 goes against what is stated at 9,3 (or, at least, presents a perspective which is considerably different). If the piece (Jn 5,1-9b.14) is traditional, we would have a traditional saying connected with the forgiveness of sins and which considers sickness a sign or result of sin. It is interesting to notice that the verb *ἀμαρτάνειν* occurs only in the passages which Jn received from tradition (5,1-9b.14; 9,1-7; comp. 8,1-11). Jn prefers the substantive to the verb (as opposed to his use of *πιστεύειν* rather than *πίστις*). It is probable that he considered sin to be a state or condition rather than an act. Both times the verb is used in the traditional perspective: act of sin—sickness, even though Jn 9,3 has Jesus reject this interpretation.

and given its true meaning.<sup>22</sup> The theme of Jesus' activity of ζωοποιήσις (and κρίσις, which is the reverse side of his activity as lifegiver) is implied in v. 17 and becomes the main theme of vv. 19-30. That the healing is seen by Jn as representing the gift of new life is made explicit in Jn 7,21-24,<sup>23</sup> where Jesus claims that he has made a *whole* man healthy and that he has therefore fulfilled the Law, not broken it.

We may now ask: why did Jn choose to introduce the Sabbath question at all? Some authors hold that the Sabbath question is an extraneous element which is forcibly introduced into the narrative and acts as a disturbing factor. One must agree that the Sabbath question was not connected with the original narrative and that it was introduced by Jn. Once this has been conceded, however, one must be careful not to underestimate the role the Sabbath issue plays in Jn 5,1-30. It may be true that it plays no visible part in the discourse contained in vv. 19-30, but one should not forget that the discourse is itself an expansion of v. 17 and that the affirmation *ὁ πατήρ μου ἔως ἄρτι ἐργάζεται, καὶ γὰρ ἐργάζομαι* is bound to the activity of Jesus as exercised *on the Sabbath*.<sup>24</sup> By placing the healing

<sup>22</sup> Cf. above, n. 19. In the *Bible de Jérusalem*, D. Mollat comments on Jn 5,14: "Le miracle est donc le 'signe' d'une résurrection spirituelle" and refers to Jn 5,21. Haenchen (*art. cit.*, 50, n. 2) comments: "Das ist richtig. Aber ... der Evangelist hat die übernommene Erzählung vom geheilten Kranken nicht so durchgeführt, dass er an diesem die geistige Auferstehung sichtbar macht". I would contend that this is not the case. Jn used v. 14, and the sense of the verse implies that more than a mere physical healing has taken place. It may be exaggerated to say, with Loisy (*ad loc.*—A. Schlatter (*Der Evangelist Johannes. Wie er spricht, denkt und glaubt* (Stuttgart, 1960), *ad loc.*), E. C. Hoskyns (*The Fourth Gospel*, ed. F. N. Davey (London, 1967), *ad loc.*) and C. K. Barrett (*The Gospel according to St. John* (London, 1967), *ad loc.*) move in the same direction) that the sickness *was* sin, but it is certain that v. 14 connects sin and sickness and, in all probability, wished to present the healing of the paralytic as typifying the gift of life (in the full sense of the expression). Is it true that Jn does not develop the "übernommene Erzählung" explicitly in the sense of a "spiritual" resurrection? He could have done so only in the ensuing monologue—and this is precisely what he has done! Jesus is the ζωοποιῶν: he gives "life" (to distinguish between "physical" and "spiritual" is not Johannine). If Jn chose the healing as an introduction to his monologue, it was precisely because he saw in this episode the gift of life (in the full sense; cf. vv. 19-30 and 7,22).

<sup>23</sup> See below, pp. 158ff.

<sup>24</sup> The Sabbath issue cannot be treated as a "complication accessoire", nor can it be held that the healing episode was chosen not to introduce the Sabbath dialogue, but because of the meaning it had in itself, meaning which was to be developed after the Sabbath dialogue and, as it were, independently (so Loisy, 393). Jn managed to

on a Sabbath (v. 9c) and by highlighting this circumstance through the resulting controversy (vv. 10-13.15-16), Jn was able to bring out the symbolic meaning he saw in the healing much more effectively. That Jesus performs this healing *on the Sabbath* is a clear manifestation of the fact that the divine prerogative of ζωοποιήσις is shared by him. Jesus' activity of healing *on the Sabbath* lent itself more naturally than the simple fact of healing to act as an introduction to the idea which was of paramount importance to Jn: the presentation of Jesus as the Son of God, who shares in the divine prerogatives of giving life (ζωοποιεῖν) and judging (κρίνειν). The introduction of the Sabbath question was facilitated by an element already contained in the traditional healing story: the carrying of the κράβατος. It is this detail which Jn exploits in the dialogue between the paralytic and the Jews (vv. 10-13) and which serves as a sort of "Auftakt" for the evangelist.

The Sabbath healing not only affords Jn the opportunity of giving a deep theological insight into the mystery of Jesus' person, it also raises the question (which goes hand in hand with this mystery itself and which is also of great interest to Jn) of his relationship to the Law. The incipient persecution of the Jews is dramatically presented as a result of Christ's Sabbath activity and of the failure of the Jews to perceive its true significance (i.e., to discover the mystery of Christ's person and, thereby, his true relationship to the Sabbath and the Law).

a) *The Sabbath work of Jesus—a violation of the Law?*

We have already mentioned the emphasis Jn lays on the carrying of the mat. It is this act which constitutes the violation of the Sabbath. Jn mentions this action three times in the verses Haenchen considers redactional (vv. 10.11.12). He evidently wants to give it stress.<sup>25</sup> The carrying of the mat is a flagrant violation of the Sabbath.<sup>26</sup> When the paralytic justifies himself by saying that the one who healed him told him to take up his mat and walk, the Jews

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fuse the two perspectives into one. Neither the healing nor the fact that it was a violation of the Sabbath are extraneous to the thought contained in vv. 17.19-30.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. the stress laid on πολλὸν ἐποίησεν at Jn 9,6.11.14.15.

<sup>26</sup> Jer 17,19-27; Neh 13,15-19; cf. Ex 21,12-17; Num 15,32-36; Jub 2,29f; Shab 7,2; 10,5.

disregard the  $\delta$  ποιήσας με ὑγιῆ<sup>27</sup> and demand to know who gave him the order. The command is illicit and the one who gave it has broken the Law.<sup>28</sup> The attention has shifted from the paralytic to the one who issued the command—he is the lawbreaker.<sup>29</sup> The words of the paralytic  $\delta\tau\iota$  Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν  $\delta$  ποιήσας αὐτὸν ὑγιῆ (cf. v. 12) call attention to the miraculous healing and omit any reference to the order given to carry the mat.<sup>30</sup> The miraculous healing is precisely that which the Jews obstinately disregard. Now the Jews no longer seem to disregard the healing: it too, as well as the illicit command, is an infraction of the Law.<sup>31</sup>

b) *The explanation and justification of Jesus' activity on the Sabbath*

The Jews persecute Jesus because he does such things on the Sabbath.<sup>32</sup> Jn 5,17 and the ensuing discourse (vv. 19ff) seek to show that such behaviour is due to a misunderstanding of Jesus and his

<sup>27</sup> "The wonderful healing has been lost sight of: only the Sabbath violation is important to the authorities" (Brown, 208). In Jn 9, the Pharisees face the fact of Jesus' healing powers and it becomes a source of embarrassment and division.

<sup>28</sup> Again we have an analogy in Jn 9, where two aspects are stressed: the healing and the kneading of the mud. Jn obviously wishes to emphasize that the Sabbath *had*, apparently, been violated.

<sup>29</sup> Commanding something unlawful (what precisely is understood by this is not stated clearly, but the Sabbath was no doubt included) was punishable with death (Sanh 11,2; b Sanh 88a). On this point cf. Schirmer, *op. cit.*, 148-149).

<sup>30</sup> Loisy (397) speaks of a "témoignage". This is exaggerated but, in the light of the attempt the man born blind will make to justify Jesus precisely on the basis of his σημεῖα in ch. 9, we can hold that Jn, through the words of the paralytic, wishes to raise the question: How can a sinner perform such signs (9,16)? Whether a "Wunder" justified the teaching of a Rabbi who went against accepted norms and whether Jn was referring to this is not clear (cf. *Str.-Bill.*, IV, 313ff for the Rabbinical texts in question). Schirmer (*op. cit.*, 149) believes Jn is making use of this principle, yet admits (n. 253) that the case of Eliezer b. Hyrkanos was decided against him, notwithstanding his miracles. If there is such an allusion in Jn (but see n. 64, below), it is clear that he has elevated the principle to new heights. The "Wunder" of Jesus are σημεῖα, they are works of the Father. Rightly understood, they do justify Jesus!

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Jn 7,22-23. The *ταῦτα* could refer to the healing and the illicit command, but the imperfect (*ἐποίει*) makes it equally possible that Jn is thinking of repeated acts of this nature (Jn 9). Jn therefore reflects quite accurately what the Synoptics tell us: Jesus was in the habit of performing miracles on the Sabbath. Cf. Lk 13,10-17; 14,1-6.

<sup>32</sup> The persecution of Jesus by the Pharisees was traditionally linked with his (apparent) violations of the Sabbath. Cf. Mk 3,6; Mt 12,14; Lk 6,11; 14,1-6.

work. Jn sees a deep theological significance in Jesus' healing on the Sabbath and makes clear that it is this significance, which is not perceived by the Jews, which alone allows one to understand and properly evaluate the Sabbath activity of Jesus.

The significance of the *σημεῖα* is given, on the one hand, by the "signs" themselves, on the other, by the words of Jesus—inseparable from the "works"—which make clear the meaning already present in the very signs. The words of Jesus in v. 17 thus give expression to the meaning already present in the sign—the sign being here not only the healing, but *the Sabbath healing*. For the evangelist the Sabbath work signifies that Jesus shares in the divine prerogative of *ζωοποιήσις*. The significance *the evangelist* sees in the Sabbath work is presented as the explanation (justification) of the "work": Jesus is the Son of God, therefore he must work on the Sabbath.

Jn does not furnish any evidence to show that the Sabbath healing *must* be interpreted in this way rather than as a violation of the Sabbath. No attempt is made to substantiate Jesus' claim on the basis of the *σημεῖον*. For this very reason the Jews can lightly dismiss the claim as blasphemy.<sup>33</sup> For the evangelist and for the reader the words (the claim to be Son of God) and the deed (the Sabbath healing—power over the Sabbath) are inseparable, they are not two distinct issues. The sign speaks for itself and, if the meaning given to it by Jesus (meaning already contained in the sign) is to be denied, the deed itself must be either denied or otherwise explained. In chapter 9, starting from the fact of the "sign", Jn will show *why* the Sabbath work of Jesus is an irrefutable indication that he is the Son of God. We wish to consider immediately the continuation of the Sabbath controversy as it is presented in Jn 9.

## 2. THE HEALING OF THE MAN BORN BLIND—Jn 9

The Sabbath controversy, which began in chapter 5 and was briefly developed at Jn 7,21-23, is given its full dramatic development in chapter 9. A second Sabbath healing gives rise to a regular judicial hearing,<sup>34</sup> which takes on the form (in its final moments) of a

<sup>33</sup> Vv. 17-18 will be considered in detail when we deal with the charge of blasphemy. See below, pp. 53ff.

<sup>34</sup> The "juridical" background was put to magnificent dramatic use by the evangelist, but one should beware of interpreting Jn 9 as the faithful protocol of a court case,



*Streitgespräch*. Jn 9 represents not only the development but also the conclusion of the Sabbath controversy; it should, consequently, allow us to discover more fully the intention Jn was pursuing in presenting the conflict of Jesus with the Pharisees over the Sabbath question the way he did. It is noteworthy that, in this chapter, Jesus does not face his adversaries directly. The judicial hearing takes place in his absence and his defence is left in the hands of one who is called "his disciple" by the Pharisees. This fact, as we hope to point out, is not without significance.

### A) *The traditional pericope*

Bultmann, Dodd and Fortna<sup>35</sup> believe that in Jn 9,1-7 we are once again dealing with a healing story which came down to Jn substantially as it now stands and which he used as an introduction to the second "Auseinandersetzung" between the Pharisees and Jesus (viz., his disciple) concerning the Sabbath. Except for a few modifications and additions,<sup>36</sup> there is nothing in the story which is not traditional.

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exact in every detail. Schirmer (*op. cit.*, 165ff) believes the whole chapter follows the articulations of a court case. The Jews hold a first hearing, then denounce the case to the Pharisees. The man is questioned as first witness. This is not sufficient: two witnesses must be heard. The parents are called ... Such an approach to Jn 9 is doomed to failure. The intent of Jn is mainly theological. If he uses juridical procedure, it is made subservient to his theological interests and not developed for its own sake.

<sup>35</sup> Bultmann, 250; Dodd, *op. cit.*, 181-188; Fortna, *op. cit.*, 70-74.

<sup>36</sup> See Dodd, *op. cit.*, 181-188; Fortna, *op. cit.*, 70-74. We can consider *ἵνα φανερωθῇ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ* (v. 3b) as Johannine, at least in the wording. R. Morgenthau's statistics show that the vocabulary is Johannine: *φανεροῦν* (0 3 0 9); *ἔργον* (6 2 2 27). "*Ἔργα* followed by *τοῦ θεοῦ*, *τοῦ πατρὸς* or *τοῦ πέμψαντος* is thoroughly Johannine. In v. 4 *τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πέμψαντός με* is obviously Johannine. '*Ὁ πέμψας* is found 28× in Jn. Only twice does it not refer to the Father (Jn 1,22 (*οἱ πέμψαντες*!); 13,16). Dodd holds that *ἡμᾶς δεῖ ἐργάζεσθαι* is also "thoroughly Johannine" (*op. cit.*, 185; but see the slightly different view presented on p. 188). However, there seems to be no reason for assuming this, nor does Dodd adduce any proof in support of his opinion. If we remove the Johannine addition in v. 4, we are left with a gnomic saying which has the work of men as its object: *ἡμᾶς δεῖ ἐργάζεσθαι ἕως ἡμέρας ἑστίν· ἔρχεται νύξ ὅτε οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐργάζεσθαι*. The *ἡμᾶς* was retained by Jn and referred to Jesus (or the Church—cf. Jn 3,11; 4,22; 9,31). We could thereby better account for the passage from the plural to the singular: *ἡμᾶς ... τοῦ πέμψαντός με*. '*Ὁ πέμψας με* is a standard Johannine expression. It is only Jesus who is sent by God, the disciples are sent by Jesus. '*Ὁ πέμψας* (= Father) is always followed by *μέ* (23×), only once by *αὐτόν* (Jn 5,23—twice if Jn 7,18 is included), never by *ἡμᾶς* (Jn 1,22 has the plural *οἱ πέμψαντες*). In the expression *ὁ πέμψας με*, *ὁ πέμψας* always indicates the Father, *μέ* always (with

Even the form, which is much the same as that of Jn 5,1-9b.14, is quite traditional.<sup>37</sup>

B) *The interest of the traditional pericope for Jn and his use of it*

From a consideration of Jn 9,1-7 it is evident that, as in Jn 5,1-9b.14, there is no element whatsoever in the traditional healing story which would allow us to connect it with the Sabbath. Once again Jn will exploit two minor details contained in the story in order to make it serve his purpose: the idea of working while it is day (v. 4) and the kneading of the mud (*ἐποίησεν πηλόν* v. 6).

V. 4 contains a traditional saying about man's labour.<sup>38</sup> If the tradition used here had already applied the saying to Jesus' work and had incorporated it into the healing story, Jn was to exploit the saying even further. This is evidenced by the addition of v. 3b, of *τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πέμψαντός με* in v. 4 and of v. 5. The *ἐργάζεσθαι* is referred by Jn to the "works" Jesus carries out at the behest of the Father. It becomes a *Stichwort* which refers back to Jn 5,17. The two verses cast light on each other: the "work" of Jesus, which manifests itself and is realized in his "works", cannot cease on the Sabbath, but only with his death (the true Sabbath of God).<sup>39</sup> Jn 9,4 thus serves as a preparation for v. 14.

The second detail (*ἐποίησεν πηλόν*), like the command to carry the mat in Jn 5, will be stressed by Jn (vv. 11.14.15) as the act (besides the healing itself) which constitutes a formal violation of the Sabbath.

In v. 14 we learn, *post factum*, that "it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes". Why did Jn wait until v. 14 to mention this fact? We cannot adduce the traditional nature of Jn 9,1-7 as an explanation. If Jn had followed the procedure used in chapter 5, he should have mentioned the Sabbath immediately after

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one exception: Jn 1,33 = John the Baptist) indicates Jesus. In v. 5 we have an *Ich-Wort* which is typically Johannine. The verse also constitutes an abrupt shift in meaning. Vv. 6-7 present nothing particularly original or Johannine, except for the interpretation given to Siloam (cf. Dodd, *op. cit.*, 185f and what he has to say about Jn 11,9-10, *ibid.*, 373-377).

<sup>37</sup> Dodd, *op. cit.*, 181-185.

<sup>38</sup> See what has been said about this verse on p. 17, n. 36. In our view, Jn simply added: *τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πέμψαντός με* (vs. Dodd) to a saying which was already part of the healing story (vs. Fortna (*op. cit.*, 72) and most critics).

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Chapter Six, on Jn 7,21-23, pp. 158 ff.

v. 7. In our opinion the reason is that vv. 8-12 are not directly concerned with the Sabbath question at all.<sup>40</sup> It is with v. 13 that the "hearing" concerning the possible infraction of the Sabbath law truly begins. The persons mentioned in v. 8 bring the man to the Pharisees, for it is the Pharisees, the official representatives of Judaism, who must conduct the hearing. This (necessary) step sets the stage for the following scene.<sup>41</sup> We are now informed that it was a Sabbath when Jesus 1) kneaded the mud and 2) opened the eyes of the blind man. As in chapter 5 (where Jesus had healed and given the command to carry the mat), we have a double infraction of the Law. The only difference is that, this time, the patient has done nothing illicit. That the man stands before the tribunal as a witness (whether as a witness for the prosecution or for the defence will become clear only later on) is obvious. The Pharisees solicit his testimony in order to pass a judgement upon the activity of Jesus (viz., upon Jesus himself). It is natural that they should be interested in the *πῶς ἀνέβλεψεν* (v. 15; comp. *τί ἐποίησέν σοι* v. 26). The question is similar to that of v. 10, but the point of view is different. At Jn 9,10 the question is prompted by the doubts about the man's identity, in v. 15 the Pharisees are interested in what Jesus *did* on the Sabbath: the kneading of the mud and the healing itself (*τὸν πηλὸν ἐποίησεν καὶ ἀνέωξεν* v. 14; *πηλὸν ἐπέθηκεν* v. 15). The answer (v. 15b) informs the Pharisees about what is already known to the reader.

Healing on the Sabbath was permitted only when life was in danger.<sup>42</sup> Since blindness is a chronic illness, Jesus should not have healed on the Sabbath.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, Jesus kneaded the mud. This detail is given great emphasis by Jn (vv. (6).11.14.15). It was one of the 39 works forbidden on the Sabbath.<sup>44</sup> Finally, Jesus used matter which was not ordinarily used during the week to anoint eyes. This

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<sup>40</sup> See below, p. 26, n. 58.

<sup>41</sup> The mentioning of the Sabbath could be taken as the foundation for the behaviour of the Jews (leading the man to the Pharisees), but this does not seem to be the case, for one would expect *ἦν γὰρ σάββατον* rather than *ἦν δὲ σάββατον*. The Sabbath is mentioned in view of what follows, not what precedes. Rightly M.-J. Lagrange (*Évangile selon saint Jean* (Paris, 1936), ad loc.) vs. Loisy (ad loc.) and H. Strathmann (*Das Evangelium nach Johannes*, NTD 4 (Göttingen, 1963), ad loc.).

<sup>42</sup> *Str.-Bibl.*, II, 488, ad Jn 7,23.

<sup>43</sup> *Id.*, II, 534.

<sup>44</sup> *Id.*, II, 530, ad Jn 9,6 A.

was a further violation of the Sabbath.<sup>45</sup> The Pharisees deduce, quite correctly from their point of view, that Jesus has not kept the Sabbath. The judgement concerning Jesus' doings entails a judgement regarding his person. Some of the Pharisees say : οὐκ ἔστιν οὗτος παρὰ θεοῦ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ὅτι τὸ σάββατον οὐ τηρεῖ, but others say : πῶς δύναται ἄνθρωπος ἁμαρτωλὸς τοιαῦτα σημεῖα ποιεῖν? We thereby learn that παρὰ θεοῦ οὐκ εἶναι = ἁμαρτωλὸς εἶναι. Not only does the ἄνθρωπος ἁμαρτωλὸς take up the οὐκ ἔστιν οὗτος παρὰ θεοῦ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, but v. 16 presents a chiastic construction :

|                           |                                |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| οὐκ ἔστιν οὗτος παρὰ θεοῦ | ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὅτι ...             |
| πῶς δύναται               | ἄνθρωπος ἁμαρτωλὸς τοιαῦτα ... |

V. 16 is important in two respects : 1) The σημεῖα worked on the Sabbath are considered from two distinct points of view : as "works" performed on the Sabbath they are *violations of the Law*; as "miracles" ("signs") they are *works of God*. 2) According to which point of view is adopted, two radically opposed conclusions will be drawn concerning the person of Jesus : as "works" performed on the Sabbath, the σημεῖα show that *Jesus is a "sinner"*; as "miracles" ("signs") they show that *Jesus is "of God"*.

a) *The Sabbath healing cannot be denied—it appears as the work of God*

In chapter 5 the Jews had disregarded the fact that a σημεῖον had been worked by Jesus; they concentrated their attention exclusively on the fact that it had been worked on a Sabbath. In chapter 9 the same attitude is adopted by some of the Pharisees, but others object that, even if the sign has been worked on a Sabbath, one has no right to overlook another important factor : that a sign *has* been worked. In view of the chiasm pointed out above, the question, "How can a sinner perform such signs?" is tantamount to saying, "But if this man is a sinner, how can we explain the sign (miracle), which seems to indicate that he is of God?"

The two different approaches lead to a division among the Pharisees (σχίσμα), they are at an impasse. There is only one way out of this dilemma (for the Pharisees!) : to deny that a miracle has really taken place. The questions raised in vv. 8-10 are taken up once again at

<sup>45</sup> Id., II, 530, ad Jn 9,6 B.

vv. 18-19, but they are given a new "twist". The question is no longer, "Is this the man who was born blind?" but, "Was this man ever blind?" The Pharisees seek to deny the fact of the healing (and, consequently, that Jesus is "of God"). The answer of the parents is categorical: "He *was* born blind". But the question "how" he was made to see is left open, for fear of the Jews (comp. Jn 19,38). The Pharisees now call the beggar once again and say: "Give glory to God, we know (for certain) that this man is a sinner". Since the glorification of God is identical with that of the Son, the Pharisees are asking the impossible when they ask the man to glorify God by affirming that Jesus is a sinner—that he did not heal him.<sup>46</sup> To their confident assertion<sup>47</sup> the blind man opposes: "That he is a sinner, of that I know nothing; all I know is that I was blind and now see".<sup>48</sup> The fact the Pharisees seek to deny is affirmed once again. V. 26 shows that they are now at a loss: it is a return to the beginning (cf. v. 15).

The beggar finally has recourse to a Rabbinical argument, again based on the fact of the healing: the healing cannot be denied and God does not hear sinners.<sup>49</sup> The Pharisees silence him by using an

<sup>46</sup> The formula is a formula of exhortation to confess the truth. The Pharisees are not asking that the glory of the healing be attributed to God rather than to Jesus (rightly Lagrange, ad loc.; Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge, 1968), 81). What they are inviting him to do is to deny the reality of the cure. In view of the use of *δοξάζειν* and *δοξα* in Jn, however, it is quite possible that the traditional formula has received a new depth of meaning. See what is said below on Jn 5,44, pp. 234ff.

<sup>47</sup> The verb denotes knowledge firmly possessed. Cf. I. de la Potterie, "Οἶδα et γινώσκω, les deux modes de la connaissance dans le 4<sup>e</sup> Évangile", *Bib* 40 (1959) 709-725, 724.

<sup>48</sup> We adopt the suggestion of C. Burchard ("Ei nach einem Ausdruck des Wissens oder Nichtwissens Joh 9,25; Act 19,2; 1 Cor 1,16; 7,16", *ZNW* 52 (1961) 73-82, 81): "Davon, dass er Sünder sein soll, weiss ich nichts". It is more in harmony with the context than to have the man admit that Jesus is perhaps a sinner ("ob er Sünder ist, weiss ich nicht"—whether he is a sinner or not, I can't say), which would be in a certain contradiction with v. 17. Cf. Bultmann, 255, n. 3.

<sup>49</sup> Commentators (cf. Hoskyns, ad Jn 9,31; Barrett and Brown, ad Jn 9,16) have pointed out that this is not sound OT or NT doctrine. Both the OT and NT speak of miracle-workers who are able to lead astray even the elect (Ex 7,11; Mt 24,24). Yet the thought that God hears the prayers of the "just" and not those of "sinners" is found both in the OT (Job 27,8.9; 35,12.13; Prov 15,29; Is 1,15; etc.) and in Greek and Hellenistic literature (*Iliad* I 218; Plato, *De Legg.* IV 8, etc.; cf. W. Bauer, *Das Johannesevangelium* (Handbuch zum NT, 6) (Tübingen, 1925), ad Jn 9,31). There is no real difficulty when we bear in mind that Jn is simply voicing a conviction we find

“argumentum ad hominem” and by casting him out of the Synagogue. The act is prompted by desperation. They are unable to give a valid answer to the objection raised by the beggar and which some of their number had been the first to raise (v. 16c).

b) *The significance of the healing—Jesus is “of God”*

The activity of Jesus cannot be separated from his person. Viewed as a violation of the Sabbath, it indicates that Jesus is not “of God” (he is a “sinner”); seen as a “miracle” (or “sign”), it indicates that he is not a “sinner” (is “of God”). The Pharisees sought to resolve this dilemma by denying the healing itself, (ironically, because this would also mean to deny that Jesus violated the Sabbath), but this attempt failed. Jn also shows that the significance of the healing cannot be denied—Jesus is “of God”.

The idea makes its appearance at Jn 9,16. The *σχίσμα*, resulting from the two opposed conclusions which apparently must both be drawn from the Sabbath healing, is already an indication that the Pharisees will not succeed in solving the contradiction. They ask the blind man (an *עם הארץ*!) for his opinion. His answer is: Jesus is a prophet (is “of God”). At v. 24 the Pharisees again seek to deny that Jesus is “of God”: they “know” he is a sinner. The beggar’s answer (we have seen) again calls their attention to the necessity of explaining the healing. At vv. 31-33 the argument in defence of Jesus reaches its summit and its conclusion: God does not hear “sinners” but only those who fear him and do his will. Jesus is therefore “of God”, if he were not, he could do nothing.

The case of Jesus (“sinner” or “of God”?) has been ably defended by his representative; the Pharisees have been defeated. The reader comes away with the conviction that Jesus is, in fact, “of God”. But what does Jn mean when he writes that Jesus is “of God?”

*The meaning of παρὰ θεοῦ εἶναι as applied to Jesus in Jn 9*

Before examining the meaning of *παρὰ θεοῦ εἶναι*, a few words must be said about the different levels on which the *σημεῖον* itself is perceived. Jn has the Pharisees speak of *σημεῖα* at v. 16. The plural is indicative. We are dealing with the significance of Jesus’

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expressed in Rabbinical traditions (cf. *Str.-Bill.*, I, 653; II, 534 (ad Jn 9,16 B); 535 (ad Jn 9,31); Schlatter, ad Jn 9,31).

"signs" in general and not merely with the one "sign" which has just been worked by Jesus. The *σημεῖον* related in Jn 9 has representative value.

In the Fourth Gospel, even those who have no faith at all must take cognizance of the *σημεῖα* as "stubborn facts" which cannot be denied. The "Jews" (in the "negative" sense) and the Pharisees must acknowledge that Jesus works many "signs" (Jn 9,16; 10,33; 11,47; 15,22), even though they try to ignore them (Jn 5) or deny them (Jn 9).

Once this is admitted, the "signs" become a source of embarrassment because, of their nature, they demand that their significance be perceived and recognized. It is, of course, possible to acknowledge the existence of the "signs" and yet to attribute no "significance" whatsoever to them, but this means to give ample proof of ill faith. If violence is not to be done to the truth, the *σημεῖα* worked by Jesus must be perceived and explained in either of two ways: 1) The *σημεῖα* are not seen as true "signs", yet they do appear as acts of divine power, as the kind of "show miracles" which Jesus refused to work<sup>50</sup> (cf. *σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα*—Jn 4,48; comp. 2,18) and which point to him as a "wonder-worker" sent by God. Jesus rejects this interpretation of his "signs".<sup>51</sup> 2) The *σημεῖα* appear to be more than mere acts of divine power.<sup>52</sup> They are manifestations of the Father, working in and through Jesus—they are *ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ* (Jn 9,4) in the strict sense.

The Pharisees have succeeded in denying neither the healing nor its significance. The significance of the healing will depend on whether it (and the "signs" in general) is viewed as a "miracle" or as a "sign" (in the full Johannine sense of the word).

Does *παρὰ θεοῦ εἶναι* have two levels of meaning which correspond to the two meanings given to the *σημεῖα* by the Jews in the Fourth Gospel? The expression occurs in Jn 9,16.33. In the first case it is used by the Pharisees, in the second by the disciple of Jesus, repeating the argument of the Pharisees. In both cases the expression is opposed to *ἀμαρτωλὸς εἶναι* (Jn 9,16.31).

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<sup>50</sup> See the accounts of the Temptation (Mk 1,12-13, Par) and comp. Mk 8,11-12, Par with Jn 2,18.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Jn 2,23-24; 3,2-3; 4,45-48; 7,3-5.

<sup>52</sup> See the section on Jn 7,51, Chapter Five, pp. 138ff.

*First level of meaning*

At v. 16 the term of reference (the Sabbath, the Law) and the contrast *παρὰ θεοῦ εἶναι* — *ἁμαρτωλὸς εἶναι* show that, in the mouth of the Pharisees, the question, "Is this man 'of God' or not?" simply means, "Is this man an 'envoyé de Dieu' (a prophet, a man of God) or not?"

The *σημεῖα* are considered "miracles", "wonders" and some Pharisees are afraid that this may force them to have to recognize that Jesus is a "wonder-worker" sent by God. In the following verse the answer of the beggar confirms that *παρὰ θεοῦ εἶναι* is to be taken in this general sense. The word *προφήτης* is used without the article. There is no allusion to the Mosaic prophet (1,21.25; 7,40) or to the prophet-Messiah (6,14f). Jesus is considered a prophet in the general sense of the term (cf. 4,19.44): a "man of God", not a "sinner". At v. 33 *παρὰ θεοῦ εἶναι* is again used in conjunction with *ἁμαρτωλός* (cf. v. 31). Once again the surface meaning (cf. v. 31, comp. 16c) is simply that Jesus is a man of God: one who fears God, who does his will (v.g., who obeys the Law—see below) and who is therefore "heard" by him.

Such is the first level of meaning of *παρὰ θεοῦ εἶναι*. Yet the deeper significance of the *σημεῖα* in Jn invites us to go beyond this meaning and, indeed, there are other indications which show that we *must* go beyond this meaning.

*Second level of meaning*

*The first indication that παρὰ θεοῦ εἶναι has a second level of meaning is that the conflict related in Jn is viewed and presented in the light of the controversy Church—Synagogue which arose after Christ's death.*

The blind man is presented as a disciple of Jesus. In vv. 24-34 he faces the Pharisees in what appears to be an "official" controversy between two "schools": on one side the disciples of Moses, on the other the disciple(s) of Jesus. The controversial nature of the dialogue shows that we are dealing with two opposed groups. The Pharisees affirm: "You are a disciple of that man (Jesus) <sup>53</sup>—we are disciples of Moses" (v. 28). In the persons of the man born blind and the

<sup>53</sup> The Pharisees are not counselling the man to *become* a disciple of Jesus (so Lagrange, ad loc.), he is considered a disciple.



Pharisees, it is the Church and the Synagogue which are coming to grips with each other as the οἶδαμεν ὅτι ... οἶδαμεν ὅτι (vv. 29.31) indicates. V. 27 probably represents more than a taunt. The question of discipleship is presented as the key to understanding Jesus and his activity. The Pharisees could "hear" (ἀκούειν) if they were disposed to become Jesus' disciples (cf. 7,17; 6,29). Whereas they, the disciples of Moses, cannot pronounce a judgement which does justice to the evidence with which they are confronted, he, the disciple of Jesus, can: Jesus is of God. The reaction of the Pharisees to this "teaching" (διδάσκειν—v. 34) reflects the same attitude the Jews assumed towards the teaching of Jesus (cf. 7,14ff) and the learned Rabbis must have assumed towards the people "ignorant of the Law" (7,49) who were "seduced" by Jesus.<sup>54</sup>

Everything in vv. 24-34 seems to show that the "time of the Church" has played an important part in the composition of the dialogue and that the man born blind is a "type" of the disciple, bearing witness to Christ before the hostile Jews.<sup>55</sup> The fate which befalls him as a result is that which, after Jamnia, befell all the disciples of Jesus who openly confessed him as the Christ: he is cast out of the Synagogue (v. 34).<sup>56</sup>

<sup>54</sup> We do not wish to anticipate a discussion concerning Jn's presentation of Jesus as a "teacher" and of the relation of Jesus' teaching to that of the Pharisees and to the Law. It is not Jesus, who is presented here as a "teacher", but his disciple. Nevertheless the activity of the disciple is a continuation and extension of that of his "teacher". The reader is therefore referred to Chapter Three, pp. 77ff, which deals the teaching of Jesus.

<sup>55</sup> The far-reaching analogies between Jn 9 and Jn 15,18-16,11 pointed out by R. H. Lightfoot (*St. John's Gospel*, ed. C. F. Evans (Oxford, 1963), 284f) further illustrate this point, which is admitted by most commentators. Cf. Loisy (598); Hoskyns (ad Jn 9,27f); Dodd (*Interpretation*, 357, n. 1); Bultmann (in the view of the evangelist, but not the Quelle—255); Barrett (ad Jn 9,28); Brown (379). See what is said below on Jn 5,41-47 and Jn 9,24-34, pp. 231ff and 105ff.

<sup>56</sup> Opinions of commentators are divided as to whether ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν ἔξω means "they cast him out of the building" or "they excommunicated him" (cast him out of the Synagogue). In the first sense: Lagrange (but we may presume excommunication followed); Lightfoot (200); Brown; P. Schanz (*Commentar über das Evangelium des hl. Johannes* (Tübingen, 1885), ad loc.); B. F. Westcott (*The Gospel according to St. John* (London, 1958), ad loc.); J. H. Bernard (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John*, 2 Vols., ICC (Edinburgh, 1963), ad loc.). In the second sense: W. Bauer (the "eventuelle Vorlage" may have meant "from the building"); Bultmann (the Quelle meant "from the building", the evangelist takes it to mean "excommunication", 255, n. 5); Barrett; Strathmann; Hoskyns; Loisy (600); Dodd (*Interpretation*, 81, n. 3). In our opinion it involves excommunication. See p. 110.

The view that the man born blind is a representative figure of the true disciple receives additional support if one admits, as many exegetes do, that *the healing itself symbolizes baptism*.<sup>57</sup> This can be affirmed with a reasonable amount of certitude both in view of the external and internal evidence and, especially, in view of the peculiar nature of the dialogue contained in vv. 8-12.<sup>58</sup>

*The second indication that παρὰ θεοῦ εἶναι has a second level of meaning comes from the terminology used at Jn 9,16.33 (παρὰ θεοῦ εἶναι) and at Jn 9,29.30 (πόθεν ἐστίν).*

The two expressions are in direct relationship. The πόθεν of Jesus is παρὰ θεοῦ (comp. v. 33 with vv. 29-31).

In the Fourth Gospel Jesus is the one who comes from God. The expressions : ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀπὸ θεοῦ, παρὰ θεοῦ, παρὰ (τοῦ) πατρός, ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ἐκ τῶν ἄνω with εἶναι, ἔρχεσθαι, ἐξέρχεσθαι, ἐκπορεύεσθαι, πέμπειν, ἀποστέλλειν, καταβαίνειν are, with very few exceptions,<sup>59</sup> used only of Jesus.<sup>60</sup> The same may be said of πόθεν ἐστίν (ἔρχεται). With two exceptions,<sup>61</sup> the expression is always used of

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Hoskyns (ad Jn 9,7); Lightfoot (202f); Lagrange (257 and 261); Loisy (591); Brown (380ff). Cf. especially O. Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship* (London, 1963), 102; P. Niewalda, *Sakramentssymbolik im Johannesevangelium* (Limburg, 1958), 166-167.

<sup>58</sup> On the external and internal evidence, cf. R. E. Brown, "The Johannine Sacramentary", in: *New Testament Essays* (London, 1967), 51-76, 64-66; Comm., 380-382. To the internal evidence one must add the peculiar nature of the dialogue contained in vv. 8-12. This unit is *not* a preliminary hearing, as is usually affirmed (most recently S. Schulz (*Das Evangelium nach Johannes*, NTD 4 (Göttingen, 1972), 144), who calls the neighbours and acquaintances of the blind man "Zeugen"). Vv. 8-12 are not directly concerned with the Sabbath question at all, but with the identity of the man who has been "enlightened" by Jesus. It does not seem too far-fetched to hold that the evangelist wished to stress that, through baptism, a new life (even from the social point of view) began for the Christians of his day which was tantamount to a change of identity. Of the commentators consulted, only Lightfoot (but see also Hoskyns, ad Jn 9,9; Bultmann, 253) has seen the point: "Underlying these two verses is the question whether a man after baptism and rebirth is the same person as before or not". Comm., ad loc., 203.

<sup>59</sup> Exceptions are: John the Baptist (Jn 1,16); the Spirit (Jn 1,32; 15,26(bis); Christians (believers) (Jn 8,47—comp. 1,13); the φωνή (Jn 12,28). Jn 6,31.32a (ἄπρος) are not true exceptions, since it is Jesus who is the "bread from heaven".

<sup>60</sup> The texts are numerous: Jn 1,13.14; 3,2.13.17.31.34; 6,(31).(32a).32b.33.38.41.42. 46.50.51.58; 7,(17).29; 8,23.42; 9,16.33; 13,3; 16,27.28.30; 17,8.

<sup>61</sup> Jn 2,9 (οἶνος); 3,8 (πνεῦμα).

Jesus and, when used of him, always indicates his divine origin (cf. Jn 7,27f; 8,14.18f; 19,7.9).

More important than these statistics, significant as they may be, is the role the question of Jesus' origin plays in chapters 7-9. The theme of Jesus' origin, found at Jn 9,16.29.30.33, is a central theme in chapters 7-8. Whether chapter 9 represents a continuation of chapters 7-8 or not,<sup>62</sup> it presents itself as a symbolic illustration of the doctrine Jn set forth in the two preceding chapters.<sup>63</sup>

The question of Jesus' origin is raised precisely in the chapters in which the question of his "Wesen" becomes the burning issue. It is in this context, and only in this context, that the *knowledge* of Jesus' origin makes its appearance. The reader had been told earlier in the Gospel that Jesus was "from above", that he had come from God, from the Father, from heaven (cf. 1,1-14; 3,2.13.19.31; 6,33.38.41.42.46.50.51.58), but it is only in Jn 7-9 that 1) the formula *πόθεν ἐστίν* (*ἡλθεν*) (*ὁ Ἰησοῦς*) makes its appearance and 2) the origin of Jesus becomes the object of controversy.

1) It is noteworthy that the formula *πόθεν ἐστίν* (*ἡλθεν*) is not used of Jesus before chapter 7 and that it is found used only in Jn 7-9, with the exception of Jn 19,9. The following texts should be compared: 7,27; 7,28; 8,14; 9,29; 9,30.

2) The controversy concerning the origin of Jesus runs all through Jn 7-8. Jn 7,27 reflects the theory of the "hidden Messiah". The Jews know where Jesus is from; he therefore cannot be the Messiah, whose origin no one will know. Jn 7,42 reflects the theory of the Davidic Messiah. Jesus was born in Nazareth (the people think), therefore he cannot be the Messiah (who was to come from Bethlehem). At 7,52 the Pharisees again dismiss Jesus as an impostor—"no prophet arises from Galilee" (or: "the prophet does not arise from Galilee"). The theme of the "ignorance" of the Jews concerning the origin of Jesus is visible not only from these discussions, which lead to *σχίσμα* (7,43; comp. 7,51f), but even more so from the answers Jesus gives, and the comments of Jn. At Jn 7,28 Jesus tells the Jews that their assertion:

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<sup>62</sup> The matter is a "quaestio disputata". Some prefer to attach Jn 9 to the following (e.g., Dodd, *Interpretation*, 354ff; but see p. 357), others attach it to Jn 7-8 (e.g., Lightfoot, 199).

<sup>63</sup> The themes of water, light and life, which are central to Jn 7-8, reappear in Jn 9, which combines elements of both these chapters. Jesus gives light to the man born blind (the word is explicitly mentioned only at 9,5—comp. 8,12—but the contrast light-darkness runs all through the chapter in virtue of the opposition blindness-opening of the eyes: 9.1.2.7.10.11.13.14.15.17.18.19.20.21.24.25.26.30.32.39.40.41) by having him "wash" (9,7(bis).11(bis).15) in the waters of the pool which bears his name (9,7.11). The progressive "enlightenment" of the blind man frees him from spiritual blindness (9,35-39) and gives him life, whereas the Pharisees remain blind, remain in their sin—in the realm of darkness and death (9,41; comp. 8,21.24).

τοῦτον οἶδαμεν πόθεν ἐστὶν is false. They know neither him nor where he is from because they do not know the one who sent him (ὁ πέψας με, ὃν ὑμεῖς οὐκ οἶδατε v. 28). It is παρ' αὐτοῦ that Jesus has come (v. 29). The Jews, consequently, cannot understand the meaning of ὅπου εἰμὶ ἐγὼ and ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν πέμψαντά με (7,33-36; comp. 8,21-22). At Jn 8,14 Jesus again tells the Jews: οὐκ οἶδατε πόθεν ἔρχομαι ἢ ποῦ ὑπάγω. When he speaks of his Father (8,18), the Jews ask: ποῦ ἐστὶν ὁ πατήρ σου? Again Jesus replies: οὔτε ἐγὼ οἶδατε οὔτε τὸν πατέρα ... When he again speaks of the one who sent him (8,26) Jn comments: οὐκ ἔγνωσαν ὅτι τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῖς ἔλεγεν (8,27). The Jews do not know the Father of Jesus, although they call him their God (8,54f). For the reader, the words of Jesus are clear enough. He speaks of his doctrine being of God, of seeking the glory of the one who sent him (7,17f), of having been sent, of being from the one the Jews do not know (7,28f), of the Father who sent him (8,16.18.19.26.29), of being "from above", "not of this world" (8,23). Finally, Jesus tells the Jews that, if God were their Father, they would love him too—ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθον καὶ ἤκω (8,42) and that God (θεὸς ἡμῶν) is his Father (8,54).

If we ask why Jn emphasizes the ignorance of Jesus' origin in these chapters, we come up with the answer that the reason is polemical and that the Jews' ignorance of his origin illustrates in a striking fashion their ignorance of his person—which is due to lack of faith (8,24.45-47).

When one returns to Jn 9,16.33 and Jn 9,29.30 with these facts in mind, the expressions παρὰ θεοῦ εἶναι and πόθεν ἐστὶν appear in a different light. The first level of meaning, given above, appears inadequate and the real sense of the terms is grasped. The Pharisees are using these terms in one sense, but the reader is meant to perceive much more. For some Pharisees Jesus has performed a "miracle" which shows that he may be a "prophet", a "man of God". For Jn Jesus has performed a "sign" and this shows that he is "of God", the Son of God.

It is not as if Jesus were just a pious Jew who does the will of God (9,31) by following the precepts of the Mosaic Law and therefore has a right to be heard by God (9,31; comp. Jn 11,41.42). What Jesus does, he does as the one who has come from God and who is one with God. For Jesus, to do the will of God means to bring the ἔργον of the Father to perfection, to "work God's works" (7,4). When the beggar says: εἰ μὴ ἦν οὗτος παρὰ θεοῦ, οὐκ ἠδύνατο ποιεῖν οὐδέν (9,33), he is repeating what Jesus has said of himself (Jn 5,19.30; 8,28): acting as he does in perfect unity with the Father, he can do nothing "of himself", he could do nothing of what he does were he not the Son of God (cf. Jn 5,30-40).

The irony of Jn 9,29 borders on sarcasm. Jesus is contrasted with Moses: "God spoke to Moses (λελάληκεν), but this man, we do not

know where he is from". The reader realizes that it is precisely because Jesus comes from God that he speaks the words of God, the words he heard from the Father (cf. 8,26). That the Pharisees do not know Jesus' origin shows that he has come from God (cf. Jn 7,27), that he is "the Messiah, the Son of God" (Jn 20,31).

The astonishing thing about the ignorance of the Pharisees is that the "sign" is there for them to see and it points to the origin of Jesus (v. 30). If they were not wilfully blind, they would discover that Jesus is of God, just as the blind man has (v. 33). They would view the *σημεῖον* not as a miracle but as a sign of Jesus' divine origin.

c) *The Sabbath has not been violated because Jesus is the Son of God*

We have seen that the dilemma of the Pharisees arose as a result of two contradictory affirmations: 1) Jesus works *miracles*—he is a "man of God"; 2) Jesus *works* (miracles) on the Sabbath—he is not a man of God, he is a "sinner". When Jesus and his activity are viewed in these terms, there is no way out of the dilemma. Even the answer of the blind man (v. 33) does not solve the difficulty if *παρὰ θεοῦ εἶναι* is simply taken to mean: to be a man of God. The dilemma of the Pharisees arises precisely because they do *not* admit that even a prophet (a man of God) can work on the Sabbath.<sup>64</sup>

Jn does not challenge this view at all. He takes it as an indisputable principle and uses it to place them before a riddle they cannot solve. One must go beyond the horizon of the Pharisees if one wishes to come up with an answer. The question is not, "Can Jesus be a man of God and notwithstanding that still work on the Sabbath?" but, "As Son of God *must* Jesus not work also on the Sabbath?" The

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<sup>64</sup> According to Schirmer, the blind man is attempting to exonerate Jesus from the charge of breaking the Law by affirming that he is a prophet. Some Rabbinical texts (Schirmer, *op. cit.*, 21-22) hold that prophets have power over the Law; other texts (Schirmer, *ibid.*, 243, n. 367) hold that no prophet can say anything that had not been written in the Torah (b Tem 16a) and that their words and deeds have to be in conformity with the Torah (b Meg 14a). It is these two opinions which, according to Schirmer, would be at the root of the controversy between the Pharisees and the beggar. In our opinion, this view cannot be held. One would have to prove that Jn was familiar with this teaching and was referring to it or, at least, that what he affirms is in harmony with it. We believe that the principle: "No man (not even a prophet) is above the Law" is a basic assumption for Jn and that his whole reasoning is based upon this premise. His contention that Jesus' power over the Sabbath shows him to be the Son of God has meaning only within this context.

answer to this last question is affirmative (Jn 5,17) and it shows that, although the Sabbath is abolished, the law is fulfilled, not violated.

In chapter 5 the fact that Jesus is the Son of God is used to explain the Sabbath "work" as a "δεῖ" which is not an infraction of the Law but its fulfilment (Jn 7,21-23). In chapter 9, starting from the fact of the healing, Jn shows that Jesus is "of God" not only in the broad sense of the term (man of God) but in the strict sense (Son of God). Once this truth is reached (by inference), the reader is left to draw his own conclusion. It is the same as that stated in chapter 5 by Jn himself: as Son of God Jesus does not violate the Sabbath, he abolishes it.

d) *Jesus is not a "sinner" (violator of the Law)*

We have shown above that to be a "sinner" and to be "of God" are contradictory terms. By showing that Jesus is "of God" (Son of God) Jn also shows that he cannot be a "sinner". We have also seen that to be a "sinner" means, for the Pharisees, "not to keep the Sabbath", to violate the Law.

We wish to pay particular attention to Jn's use of ἁμαρτωλός because the futile attempt made by the Pharisees to convict Jesus as a "sinner" shows in the clearest way possible that the norm they are using is an understanding of the Law which proves completely inadequate when used as a norm for judging Jesus.

### 3. JESUS—A ἁμαρτωλός?—Jn 9,16.24

The importance of the term the Pharisees use to express what Jesus is in their eyes (ἁμαρτωλός ἐστιν) can hardly be over-estimated. A clue to the meaning of ἁμαρτωλός is already given at 9,16 (see above). Yet it is only a careful examination of the meaning the term ἁμαρτωλός (and its Hebrew equivalent) has outside of the Gospel of St. John which can yield an adequate understanding of the meaning Jn may have wished to give this term.

#### A) *The OT vocabulary*

##### *\*Ἀμαρτωλός*

\*Ἀμαρτωλός is found some 145x in the LXX. More than 2/3 of these occurrences are found in the Pss and Sir (107x—Pss = 68x; Sir = 39x). Outside of these two books ἁμαρτωλός is found used sporadically in the Wisdom literature (Tob = 3x;

Prov = 4x (6x?); Wisd = 2x), in the Pentateuch (4x), Is (6x) and 1 Macc (5x), as well as in other books (very rarely).

'Αμαρτωλός translates a Hebrew equivalent 94x (רשע = 72x; רשע = 2x; חטא = 11x; חוטא = 3x; חטא = 2x; חטא = 1x; חנף = 1x; חרש = 1x; רע = 1x). In two (or three) cases the Hebrew is uncertain. 'Αμαρτωλός is thus the normal (almost exclusive) Greek equivalent of the root רשע (74x out of 94). The great majority of the eighteen (or seventeen) exceptions is found outside the Pss. In the Pss αμαρτωλός does not translate רשע only 5x out of 68.<sup>65</sup> 'Αμαρτωλός in the Pss therefore corresponds almost unfailingly to רשע (61x—63 with רשע—out of 68). It is true that we also find ἀσεβής used to render רשע, but whereas αμαρτωλός = רשע (רשע) is found 63x in 36 Pss spread over the whole Psalter,<sup>66</sup> ἀσεβής = רשע is found only 16x and only in eight of the first 57 Pss.<sup>67</sup> These statistics could lead one to think that the divergence (רשע = αμαρτωλός; רשע = ἀσεβής) is due to different translators, but Ps 9 and Ps 36, where ἀσεβής and αμαρτωλός are both used to translate רשע, speak against this.

#### 'Ασεβής

'Ασεβής occurs approximately 240x in the LXX.<sup>68</sup> Although it is found some 19x in the first 57 Pss, it is a favourite term in the Wisdom literature where it occurs more than 2/3 of the time (165x). The distribution is as follows: Prov = 94x; Job = 39x; Sir = 18x; Wisd = 14x. 'Ασεβής is used approximately 187x to translate Hebrew equivalents. It translates רשע some 142x (the root רשע some 147x), other Hebrew words only 29x. In eleven cases the Hebrew is uncertain.

Contrary to the Pss, רשע is translated very frequently, almost exclusively by ἀσεβής in Prov (67x out of 78), Job (25x out of 26) and Eccl (7x out of 7). To this we must add that we never found αμαρτωλός for רשע, except in one case.<sup>69</sup> We must therefore speak of a divergence in translation: רשע is normally rendered by αμαρτωλός in Pss, by ἀσεβής in the Wisdom literature.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Ps 1,1.5; Ps 103(104),35 = חטא. Ps 128(129),3 = חרש. Ps 140(141),15 has no Hebrew equivalent.

<sup>66</sup> K. H. Rengstorf (*TWNT* I, art. αμαρτωλός, 324, n. 33) writes: "Dagegen findet sich αμαρτωλός = רשע in 37 über das ganze Buch verstreuten Psalmen". This is incorrect. 'Αμαρτωλός = רשע is found in 34 Pss; αμαρτωλός = רשע in two (Ps 83(84), 10; 124(125),3).

<sup>67</sup> Rengstorf (*art. cit.*, *ibid.*) gives 17 Pss, but this is inexact.

<sup>68</sup> Rengstorf (*art. cit.*, 342, 31) claims that ἀσεβής occurs 180x in the LXX. This is incorrect.

<sup>69</sup> Prov 24,19. In Sir αμαρτωλός is found 22x approximately as translation for a Hebrew equivalent. It translates רשע some 7x, חטא 1x. 'Ασεβής corresponds to a Hebrew word 11x. It translates רשע 3x, חטא 1x.

<sup>70</sup> 'Ασεβής is only of interest to us insofar as it is linked with רשע. In analyzing the meaning of רשע we also grasp the meaning of ἀσεβής, since ἀσεβής does not translate רשע in only 29 cases out of 187.

*\*Ανομος*

\*Ανομος renders <sup>רשע</sup> some 31x (the root <sup>רשע</sup> some 40x). It is a favourite term with the translator of Ez, who translates <sup>רשע</sup> by *ἀνομος* some 18x out of 26 (the root <sup>רשע</sup> 20x out of 28).

<sup>רשע</sup>

The word <sup>רשע</sup> occurs some 260x in the MT. It is found predominantly in the Pss (81x) and in the Wisdom literature (Prov = 78x; Job = 26x; Eccl = 7x; Sir = 10x) for a total of 121x. Thus in the Pss and Wisdom literature <sup>רשע</sup> is found 202x out of 260, which is close 4/5 of all the occurrences in the MT. Ez is the only book where the term is found frequently (26x) outside of these writings, although Is also uses the term some 16x and Jer some 6x.

*Conclusions*

- 1) The <sup>רשע</sup> is found predominantly in the Pss and Wisdom literature.
- 2) The *ἀμαρτωλός* is found almost exclusively in the Pss (= <sup>רשע</sup>) and Sir.
- 3) The *ἀσεβής* (= <sup>רשע</sup>, where there is a Hebrew equivalent) is found predominantly in the Wisdom literature.
- 4) It is in the Pss that a) *ἀμαρτωλός* and <sup>רשע</sup> are found most frequently b) *ἀμαρτωλός* consistently translates <sup>רשע</sup>. Whether Jn is reflecting the LXX or the MT, the Psalter is our most important source for determining the meaning *ἀμαρτωλός* may have in the Fourth Gospel. In the second place comes the Wisdom literature—Sir for *ἀμαρτωλός*, Prov and Job for *ἀσεβής* (= <sup>רשע</sup>).

Before passing on to examine the figure of the <sup>רשע</sup>—*ἀμαρτωλός* in the Pss and Wisdom literature, there is another point of vocabulary which deserves great attention: it is the fact that *ἀμαρτωλός* and *ἀσεβής* very rarely correspond to the root <sup>אטח</sup>.

*\*Αμαρτωλός (ἀσεβής) — אטח*

In the Pss, *ἀμαρτωλός* is found only 3x for <sup>אטח</sup>.<sup>71</sup> Ps 1 seems to be a law to itself for here, contrary to the normal translation found in the Pss, *ἀμαρτωλός* translates <sup>אטח</sup> 2x and *ἀσεβής* translates <sup>רשע</sup> 4x. Is it a coincidence that Ps 1 belongs to the <sup>משל</sup> category? If we exclude Ps 1, we would be left with only three (two) cases in which the word *ἀμαρτωλός* does not render <sup>רשע</sup> in the Pss and with only one case in which *ἀμαρτωλός* renders <sup>אטח</sup>. In Prov *ἀμαρτωλός* translates <sup>אטח</sup> only once (23,17), the participle <sup>אטח</sup> once (?) (11,31).<sup>72</sup>

Contrary to the Pss, *ἀμαρτωλός* corresponds consistently to the root <sup>אטח</sup> in

<sup>71</sup> Cf. n. 65.

<sup>72</sup> The text is uncertain. <sup>אטח</sup> is translated either by *ἀμαρτωλός* or by *ἀσεβής*.



the Pentateuch (3x), 3 K (1x), Am (2x) and Is (4x).<sup>73</sup> Although in these books ἀμαρτωλός is found very seldom, it *never* corresponds to רשע<sup>74</sup> (with the exception of Is 14,5).

Even with these exceptions, the correspondence ἀμαρτωλός—חטא is very rare. The same may be said of ἀσεβής. It is twice found for חטא (Ps 25(26),9; 50(51),15); once (?) for חטא (Prov 11,31); once for חטא<sup>75</sup> (Prov 13,22).

It is evident that, in the LXX, ἀμαρτωλός (ἀσεβής) almost always corresponds to the root רשע and very rarely translates the root חטא. Ἀμαρτία, on the contrary, most often corresponds to חטא (277x). It is only found 2x for רשע. As for ἀμαρτάνειν, it is found 164x for the verb חטא, only 3x for the verb רשע (always in the Hifil).

A detail which is very significant is the tendency to translate חטא<sup>76</sup> verbally (with the participle of ἀμαρτάνειν) instead of using the substantive ἀμαρτωλός (cf. 1 K 15,18; Ps 24,8; Prov 13,21). From this Rengstorff rightly concludes that "sprachgeschichtlich" there is no complete correspondence between ἀμαρτωλός and ἀμαρτία—ἀμαρτάνειν.<sup>74</sup> The observations we have made above corroborate this assertion. We may further add: 1) While ἀμαρτωλός translates רשע consistently, ἀμαρτία and ἀμαρτάνειν never translate the root רשע (5 exceptions only). 2) The verb רשע is translated by a number of Greek equivalents, some of which appear relatively rarely in the LXX. An obvious effort is made not to translate by ἀμαρτάνειν. 3) There are texts where one would expect to find ἀμαρτωλός (if ἀμαρτωλός simply meant ὁ ἀμαρτάνων or (τὴν) ἀμαρτίαν ποιῶν) used to translate the root חטא. The texts in question are those where the MT has the participle חוטא. In Is 1,4; 65,20 the participle חוטא is, in fact, translated by ἀμαρτωλός. It is significant that these two texts of Is are the only two cases in which ἀμαρτωλός renders חוטא.<sup>75</sup> Although the MT offers many instances in which חוטא is used in the sense of "sinner",<sup>76</sup> the LXX carefully avoids translating ἀμαρτωλός and uses some other equivalent, most often the participle ἀμαρτάνων. We have seen that the translators of Is do not observe the rigorous distinction between רשע and חטא which is respected by the translators of the Ps and of the Wisdom literature.

## B) The רשע—ἀμαρτωλός—ἀσεβής in the Pss and Wisdom literature

### a) The background : Covenant Law

<sup>73</sup> Ἀμαρτωλός = חטא<sup>77</sup> Is 1,4; 65,20.

Ἀμαρτωλός = חטא<sup>78</sup> Gen 13,13; Num 16,38 (17,3); 32,14; 3 K 1,21; Am 9,10; Is 1,28; 13,9.

Ἀμαρτωλός = חטא Am 9,8.

<sup>74</sup> Rengstorff, *TWNT* I, 321, 15; 324, 38; 332, 18f.

<sup>75</sup> As indicated above (n. 72), the text of Prov 11,31 is uncertain.

<sup>76</sup> Prov 8,36; 11,31; 13,22; 14,21; 19,2; Eccl 2,26; 7,26; 8,12; 9,2.18; Ez 18,4.20. For פשע comp. Prov 29,6: **כפשע איש** = ἀμαρτάνοντι ἀνδρί.

If we abstract from the two prophetic interludes,<sup>77</sup> we may say that the religion of Israel is a "social" religion, religion in Israel (and Judaism) being itself a "social" fact. The basis of this concept of religion, which is quite foreign to us, can be traced back to the idea of revealed religion, as it was understood by the OT and Judaism.<sup>78</sup>

Yahweh is a living God who reveals himself in his deeds (history, creation) and through his "word". God manifests himself to all peoples in history and nature, but he manifests himself to Israel in a unique manner: through election and covenant and through his "word".

The purpose of God's self-revelation to Israel is the election of Israel to become the people of the Covenant. In the Covenant<sup>79</sup> God imposes certain duties upon Israel and in turn promises to be their God, to defend and protect them and to make them into a great nation. The Covenant thus calls Israel into being and gives its life and history a goal and meaning. The stipulations of the Covenant find their fullest expression in the Law. If Israel is not faithful to the Law, it will mean the end for Israel. It is not surprising that that which unites the tribes to one another and makes them a unified people with a strong sense of solidarity is the Covenant will of God, the Law.<sup>80</sup> In the post-exilic period the Law will be considered that which *establishes* the relationship of Israel to Yahweh: Israel becomes a religious community which exists because of the Law; obedience to the Law determines whether one belongs to this community or not.<sup>81</sup>

These three factors (which are one) of Revelation, Covenant and Law determine the nature of religion in Israel. The Law embraces every aspect of social life, the life of Israel in its totality (how could it be otherwise, since it is the Covenant itself which establishes Israel and leads its history to its consummation?). No

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<sup>77</sup> The prophets, by introducing new norms, brought "social" religion to a crisis. Although they did not deny the force of the Law or Covenant, they considered the Covenant and statutes no longer able to do justice to the vital personal quality of the divine-human relationship. Cf. W. Eichrodt, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, I (Stuttgart-Göttingen, <sup>8</sup>1968), 250-251; H. Birkeland, *The Evildoers in the Book of Psalms* (Oslo, 1955), 59-60; W. Gutbrod, *TWNT* IV, art. νόμος, 1032f.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. G. F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era* (Cambridge, 1966), I, 460-462.

<sup>79</sup> The history of the Covenant concept shows that it varies considerably through the different periods of Israel's history. There was always, however, a tendency to adopt a "legalistic", "juridical" view of the Covenant. This tendency is already discernible in the period which preceded the Yahwist-Elohistic refashioning of the Covenant concept and in the Deuteronomic Law. Cf. Eichrodt, *Theol.* I, 17-23. In the post-exilic period the "formal" aspect of the Covenant (observance of the commandments) gains the upper hand and will dominate Judaism. Cf. E. Sellin, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Leipzig, <sup>2</sup>1936), 76; Eichrodt, *Theol.* I, 28ff.

<sup>80</sup> We take "Law" here in the sense of "the revelation of the divine will to Israel" as expressed concretely in the whole body of legislation found in the different "codes" and in the oral tradition. Although "Torah" is a broader concept, this is practically what it came to mean in the course of time. See below, pp. 432-435 and esp. 432, n. 9; 514ff.

<sup>81</sup> Gutbrod, *TWNT* IV, 1036-1037.

distinction is made between "moral" and "ritual" law, between "civil" and "religious" law. All social norms are the expression of God's Covenant will. Even though, like all social laws, they came into existence gradually and gradually evolved, they are seen as part and parcel of the Law given by God to Israel in the Covenant. The Law is therefore a fixed "pattern"<sup>82</sup> of social behaviour and it is according to this "pattern" that individuals are judged to be "righteous" or "sinners".

It is only natural that the opposition **רשע**—**צדיק** (*ἀμαρτωλός*, *ἀσεβής*—*δίκαιος*, *εὐσεβής*)<sup>83</sup> should become more frequent and be given greater emphasis in the measure in which greater importance is given to the Law and greater emphasis laid on its observance. Israel was always conscious of the fact that individual Israelites were unfaithful to the Law. Even in the pre-exilic period we find the opposition "sinners" ("evildoers")—"just" ("righteous")—especially in the older parts of Prov and in some pre-exilic Pss—but it is only in the post-exilic literature that the opposition becomes current.<sup>84</sup>

The Exile had vindicated the prophets. In the post-exilic period the Exile is seen as a punishment for Israel's unfaithfulness toward the Covenant Law. Great stress is now laid on the observance of the commandments.<sup>85</sup> Legal prescriptions become more numerous, more demanding and more difficult to keep. As a result, the distinction between those who are faithful to the Law and those who are not becomes sharper and more frequent.<sup>86</sup> The terms **רשע** (*ἀμαρτωλός*, *ἀσεβής*), and **צדיק** (*δίκαιος*, *εὐσεβής*) abound in the post-exilic literature precisely for this reason.

Having established that the Law is the "pattern" or "norm" according to which one is judged and classified as a **צדיק** or a **רשע**, we must now seek to define what precisely distinguishes the "just" from the "sinner".

#### b) *The **רשע** (*ἀμαρτωλός*) in the Pss*

In a meticulous study on the notion of "justice" and derivatives in the OT, A. Descamps<sup>87</sup> has affirmed that the "legalistic" religious attitude had a marked influence on a concept of "justice" and "just" found in the Pss and which goes back to the last decades before the Exile.<sup>88</sup> The "just" no longer appears simply as one who is juridically declared innocent, but a pious observer of the Law,

<sup>82</sup> We are using the term "pattern" in the sociological sense, as defined by Birkeland (*Evildoers*, 17): "A complex of traditionally combined manifestations of human behaviour or ideology, appearing associated with the consciousness of norms".

<sup>83</sup> **צדיק** and **רשע** are contrary terms. They are found in opposition more than 50 times. In defining one, one consequently defines its contrary.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Sellin, *Theol.*, 75-76.

<sup>85</sup> Eichrodt, *Theol.*, I, 28-29; II, 207-210; 238-239.

<sup>86</sup> Birkeland, *Evildoers*, 68; Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 210; Sellin, *Theol.*, 75.

<sup>87</sup> Art. "Justice et justification", *DBS* IV, 1417-1460.

<sup>88</sup> "On ne peut parler d'un genre littéraire légaliste, mais plutôt d'une influence de la religion légale sur les diverses formes littéraires; aussi, on observe, durant les dernières décades préexiliennes, des modifications du vocabulaire de justice, dues au développement de la pitié légale". *Ibid.*, 1427; see further 1435-1436.

oppressed by the "wicked".<sup>89</sup> צדקה may here come to designate the "justice" of the Law (as distinguished from "justice" as "legal innocence" Ps 7,9; 35,24).

In Ps 18 we are given a self-portrait of the "just":

"The Lord rewarded me according to my justice (צדקי) ...

For I have kept the ways of the Lord and have  
not wickedly departed (רשעתי) from my God.

For all his ordinances were before me,  
and his statutes I did not put away from me.

I was blameless before him ...

Therefore the Lord has rewarded me according  
to my justice (צדקי) (vv. 20-24).

The "justice" of the "just" is his complete fidelity to the Law (cf. Ps 119,121).

The "hymnic" Ps praise above all God's "justice", but some speak of a "justice" which consists in the observance of the commandments and of the "just" as one who is faithful to the Law (Ps 15,1f; 24,3f). The term "just" extends to embrace all Israel since the "just", the faithful of Yahweh, the observers of the Law, represent Israel.<sup>90</sup>

It is the Ps of the Wisdom current which give us the most exhaustive description of the צדיק. He "delights in the Law of the Lord" and "meditates on his Law day and night" (Ps 1,2); he "fears the Lord" and "greatly delights in his commandments" (Ps 112,1). He asks to be preserved from "hidden faults" (inadvertent transgressions), such is his fear of violating the Law, which is for him "more to be desired than gold" (Ps 19,10.12). "The Law of his God is in his heart" (Ps 37,31) and he is taught out of the Law by the Lord (Ps 94,12) whose precepts he performs with faithfulness and uprightness (Ps 111,7f). To what extent the "wisdom" of the Law permeates the whole life of the צדיק is expressed in Ps 119. The soul of the צדיק is consumed with longing for God's ordinances all the time (v. 20), he keeps the Law and observes it with his whole heart (v. 34), he loves and reveres the commandments (v. 48), etc.

If the צדיק of the Ps may be defined as one whose whole life is under the influence and radiance of the Law, this does not mean that he does not sin. There are enough examples both in the "Individual lamentations" and in other Ps which show that even the "just" sins.<sup>91</sup> Yet, as Staerk<sup>92</sup> has pointed out, it is difficult to determine the precise nature of the individual acts (words, deeds) which the authors of the "Individual lamentations" confess as sins.<sup>93</sup> That the צדיקים should speak so little about their sins, according to this author, flows

<sup>89</sup> "... on perçoit l'influence de la Loi: le juste n'est plus, en un sens profane et passif, l'innocent des textes législatifs, ni le représentant de la classe sociale des pauvres; il est, le plus souvent, en un sens positif et religieux, un homme pieux, un observateur de la Loi, opprimé par des impies". Descamps, *art. cit.*, 1436.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Descamps, *ibid.*, 1437-1438.

<sup>91</sup> See, for example, Ps 65,2f; 103,13f; 78,59; 143,2 and esp. Ps 50.

<sup>92</sup> W. Staerk, *Sünde und Gnade nach der Vorstellung des älteren Judentums, besonders der Dichter der sogenannten Busspsalmen* (Tübingen, 1905).

<sup>93</sup> Staerk, *op. cit.*, 4-6.

from the very nature of "legal piety". The positive attitude of the צדיקים towards the Law and their confidence in its life-giving force determine their superficial attitude towards their own sins. It is not that they deny that they "sin" (their sicknesses and troubles place them before this reality), but their desire to fulfill the Law to the best of their ability makes them conceive of their "sins" as occasional lapses due to weakness or error and prevents them from recognizing sin as something which is deeply rooted in man and from which they—like all others—are not free.<sup>94</sup>

The view of Staerk that the "sins" of the צדיק are viewed by him as occasional lapses which do not make of him a רשע is shared by Birkeland, Moore and Rengstorf. These authors hold that the transgressions of the צדיקים were considered "casual". They were characterized with the stems חטא and פשע and did not make of the צדיק a רשע.<sup>95</sup>

It is one's *basic attitude towards* the recognized norm, *the Law*, which makes of one a צדיק or a רשע. The life of the "righteous" follows the "pattern" of the Law, that of the "sinner" is the *Spiegelbild* of this pattern,<sup>96</sup> its antithesis. The רשע may be defined as one who consistently behaves contrary to the recognized norms set forth in the Torah.<sup>97</sup> This behaviour is the outcome of his basic attitude towards the Law, which may vary from one of opposition to one which is simply "liberal" or "lax". The stereotyped description of the רשע,<sup>98</sup> found in the Pss, may not be unbiased, but it brings out the fundamental attitude which characterizes the רשע.

Birkeland has argued quite convincingly that in the Pss רשעים is a designation for the Gentiles.<sup>99</sup> רשעים may designate individuals within Israel, but only in a

<sup>94</sup> Staerk, *ibid.*, 6 and *passim*—esp. 12-14. With the opinion of Staerk that the view of sin in Judaism was "sehr äusserlich und lax" (25), Rengstorf (*TWNT* I, 330, 10ff) is in agreement.

<sup>95</sup> "The righteous man ... shares in the universality of sin ... but he is not for that denied the character and name of a righteous man, much less is he called a 'sinner' ". Moore, *Judaism*, I, 494. Further Birkeland, *Evildoers*, 58; Rengstorf, *TWNT* I, 325, 35ff.

<sup>96</sup> "The idea of righteousness is ... determined by the axioms of revealed religion. The righteous man is ... he alone who strives to regulate his whole life by the rules God has given in this twofold Law" (Moore, *ibid.*, 494). The definition of the wicked is antithetical and therefore also determined "negatively" by the pattern of the Law (cf. Th. Vriezen, *RGG* VI, art. "Sünde und Schuld", 480).

<sup>97</sup> Moore (*ibid.*, I, 493ff). Rengstorf (*TWNT* I, 325-326), L. Köhler (*Theologie des Alten Testaments* (Tübingen, 1936), 161) and Birkeland (*Evildoers*, 58; 68) are all in agreement in defining the "wicked" as "the man who knowingly and wilfully transgresses or ignores the revealed will of God, and that persistently or habitually". Moore, *ibid.*, 493 (I underline).

<sup>98</sup> The fixed descriptions of the "just" and the "wicked" "... were divinely revealed descriptions of the two classes into which mankind divides itself" (Moore, *ibid.*, 494). On the existence of a Hebrew "pattern" for "evildoers", see Birkeland, *op. cit.*, 17-24; for the content of this "pattern" cf. Birkeland's *Die Feinde des Individuums in der israelitischen Psalmenliteratur* (1933), 59-87.

<sup>99</sup> *Evildoers, passim*, but esp. 10-16 and 65-67.

"derivative" sense, insofar as they associated with the pagans.<sup>100</sup> If correct, this opinion is a perfect illustration of the fact that the רשע is one who is "per definitionem" opposed to the Law and to the social unit which lives by it.

Whether the רשעים in the Pss are Jews or Gentiles,<sup>101</sup> the fact remains that the רשע is one who has "kein korrektes Verhältnis zur Tora".<sup>102</sup>

c) *The ἀμαρτωλός (רשע) in the Wisdom literature*

That the רשע (ἀμαρτωλός, ἀσεβής) should be found, outside of the Pss, predominantly in the Wisdom literature (Prov and Sir in particular) may come as somewhat of a surprise. Wisdom was originally a separate current which had no direct relationship to that of the Law. The apparent anomaly is explained when one recalls, first, that in the later literature of this current (Sir, Tob, Eccl, 4 Macc, Bar, Abot), "wisdom" is identified with the Law<sup>103</sup> and, second, that the "legal" current exercised an undeniable influence even on the earlier Wisdom literature.<sup>104</sup>

1) *Proverbs*. In Prov "fear of the Lord"—which is the basis of righteousness—is inseparable from the keeping of the Law.<sup>105</sup> In this book the relationship to God and his Law is primordial and great emphasis is laid on the following of the commandments.<sup>106</sup>

Even in the pre-exilic strata of the Prov one can discern the influence of the "legal" current, according to Descamps.<sup>107</sup> If צדקה in some pre-exilic proverbs

<sup>100</sup> For the "general" sense of "evildoers", which may apply to individual Israelites indirectly and derivatively cf. *Evildoers*, 58; 64; 68; 71. "Israelite groups are included as far as cooperation with foreigners is concerned" (93).

<sup>101</sup> Staerk (*op. cit.*, 70, n. \*\* to p. 11) and Rengstorf (*TWNT* I, 325) hold that they are Jews. Both, however, were unacquainted with Birkeland's two major works on the subject.

<sup>102</sup> E. Sellin (*Israelitisch-jüdische Religionsgeschichte* (Leipzig, 1933), 110) maintains that the Law in the Pss "durchaus nicht im Mittelpunkt des religiösen Interesses steht, vielfach überhaupt nicht als Massstab der Frömmigkeit gewertet wird". This view cannot be accepted. The words תורה and ברית are not found very frequently in the Pss (תורה = Ps 1,2; 37,31; 40,9; 78,1.5.10; 89,31; 94,12; 105,45; 119, *passim*; ברית = Ps 25,10.14; 44,18; 50,5.16; 55,21; 78,10.37; 74,20; 83,6; 89,4.29.35.40; 103,18; 106,45; 105,8.10; 111,5.9; 132,12), but, if the Law is simply "vorausgesetzt", it is the Law which defines the obligations of the "just". In this sense cf. Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 239 and J. Koeberle, *Sünde und Gnade im religiösen Leben des Volkes Israel bis auf Christum* (München, 1905), 340-342.

<sup>103</sup> Cf. Koeberle, *op. cit.*, 354-355; Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 239; 260.

<sup>104</sup> Speaking of the opposition "just"—"sinner" and of the Wisdom vocabulary, Descamps remarks: "Il est certain ... que tout le vocabulaire sapientiel fut mis au service de la religion légaliste, et que la lecture religieuse des Proverbes aboutit à faire du 'juste' un fidèle de la Loi". *Art. cit.*, 1429.

<sup>105</sup> Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 187-188.

<sup>106</sup> Koeberle, *op. cit.*, 356.

<sup>107</sup> *Art. cit.*, 1427-1430.

means "juridical innocence" (which was the original sense of the term), in others it already has that of "observance of the Law". The pair *צדיק-רשע*, as ancient as Wisdom literature itself, is now put at the service of a religion centred around the observance of the commandments. *צדיק* indicates one who practices "justice" actively and is at times clearly designated as one who follows the Law. This legalistic meaning may also be discerned in the post-exilic section (Prov 1-9).

The "righteous" (viz., "wise") is presented as one who loves, prizes, heeds, respects, searches after, seeks wisdom (instruction, the commandments, the Law) and "fears" the Lord.<sup>108</sup> The "wicked" (viz., "fool") despises, hates, scoffs at, ignores wisdom (knowledge, instruction, the "word", the commandments, the Law) and does not fear the Lord.<sup>109</sup> The terms show that we are dealing with two "attitudes" which are fundamentally different, and that it is these attitudes which characterize the "just" ("wise") and the "wicked" ("fool").

2) *Sirach*. For Sir "knowledge" and "wisdom" are to be identified with the Law of Moses.<sup>110</sup> The "righteous" ("wise") is characterized by his scrutinizing of the Law and his earnest endeavour to observe it.<sup>111</sup> "Wise" and "righteous" is he who keeps the commandments.<sup>112</sup> As in Prov, the "righteous" is presented as one whose fundamental attitude distinguishes him from the "wicked". The "righteous" is characterized as one who desires, seeks, loves, holds fast to, serves, lends his ear to, meditates continually upon, puts his confidence in wisdom, the commandments, the Law.<sup>113</sup> The "wicked" on the contrary holds godliness in abomination (1,25), has a stubborn heart and is proud—the plant of wickedness has taken root in him (3,27f), hates correction (21,6), hates the Law (33,2) and has abandoned the Law of the Most High (41,8).

3) *Job*. The concept of the "just" found in Sir is basically the same as that already found in Job; it is also that of later Wisdom (Wisd). The discussion about the suffering of the "just", which constitutes the main issue in Job, is to be understood against the background of the post-exilic interpretation of the Law.<sup>114</sup> It is in these years that the question of "retribution" —reward for the "just", the followers of the Law (i.e., the Jewish exiles who returned to Palestine and wished to live faithful to the Law) and punishment for "sinners" (i.e., the half-pagan inhabitants of the land and their followers among the Jews)—becomes a burning issue.

The *רשע* is one who wilfully transgresses the Law in a persistent and habitual manner.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>108</sup> Prov 2,1ff; 3,1; 4,6.8.13.20; 10,8; 12,1; 13,13; 14,2; 15,9.14; 16,20; 22,17ff; 23,12.17. With special reference to the Law, cf. 6,23; 4,4; 7,1.2; 13,13; 19,16; 28,4.7.9.

<sup>109</sup> Prov 1,7.22.29; 5,12.13.23; 12,2; 13,13.18; 14,2; 15,5.32; 19,16; 21,24; 23,9. With special reference to the Law: 28,4.9; 19,16; 13,13.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. especially Sir 24,23 (in context) and comp. 6,37; 9,15; 17,11; 19,20; 33,2; 39,1.

<sup>111</sup> Sir 6,37; 19,20-24; 32,15; 33,2.3; 38,33b; 39,1.

<sup>112</sup> Sir 1,25; 2,15; 32,15.24; 33,2f; 51,18-19.

<sup>113</sup> See nn. 111 and 112 and further Sir 4,11-17; 14,20-15,8; 51,13-22.

<sup>114</sup> Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 262.

<sup>115</sup> Descamps, *art. cit.*, 1441.

d) *The רשע in later Judaism (Apocrypha and Rabbinical literature)*

In later Judaism רשעים becomes a *terminus technicus* for the Gentiles.<sup>116</sup> This evolution is the result of the increased importance given to the Torah in this period.<sup>117</sup> Israel, as the nation to which the Torah is entrusted, is "holy". The Torah is now seen as *the* means of sanctification—it is the divine aid given to man to overcome evil.<sup>118</sup> Righteousness becomes a social inheritance. Those who belong to Israel are holy, those who do not are "sinners".

Sjöberg has pointed out that God's love in the *Apocrypha* is reserved for Israel and the "just".<sup>119</sup> That mercy towards "sinners" is not mentioned and that God's love and mercy are mentioned only in relation to Israel and the "just", can be explained only if Israel as a whole is seen as "just" and "evildoers" in its midst are considered as not belonging to the people, as being equal to the pagans.<sup>120</sup>

The studies of D. Rössler on the place and meaning the Law has in the Jewish *Apocalyptic literature*<sup>121</sup> have shown that in these writings (2 Bar, 4 Esd and eth Hen, in particular) the question as to whether one is a צדיק or a רשע is determined on the basis of the Law and, more precisely, on the basis of one's basic attitude towards the Law.<sup>122</sup>

In the *Rabbinical literature* of the Tannaitic period the connection between "righteousness" and the Torah (Israel) is so close that one may find the affirmation: no Israelite will not have a share in the world to come.<sup>123</sup> When exceptions to this rule are mentioned, it is only to support the main thesis and we are furthermore often dealing with cases in which the individual has cut himself off from his people.<sup>124</sup> From the idea of guilt or justice based upon the moral life of the individual, we have passed to that of "righteousness" or "sinfulness" determined by whether one belongs to Israel or not. This implies, of course, accepting or rejecting the Law, as can be seen in the attitude of the Tannaim towards the Gentiles. The Gentiles are "sinners" and have been destined from the beginning to damnation. Their "godlessness" is wilful and consists primarily in having refused the Torah.<sup>125</sup> If the possibility of attaining eternal life for the pagan is admitted by some texts, it is only if their life is "righteous" according to the Torah. The idea that it is impossible for a pagan to be "just" is more prevalent

<sup>116</sup> Rengstorff, *TWNT* I, 329, 32ff.

<sup>117</sup> Id., *ibid.*, 328-329.

<sup>118</sup> S Dt 11,18; Shab 146a; Targ Is 53,11; Targ Gen 3,15.

<sup>119</sup> E. Sjöberg, *Gott und die Sünder im palästinischen Judentum* (Stuttgart, 1938), 204.

<sup>120</sup> Sjöberg has failed to point out how the equivalence "sinners" within Israel—"pagans" casts light on the notion of "sinner" in this literature. "Sinners" in Israel do not really belong to the "people" since the "religious" aspect has substituted the ethnic as determining who belongs to the "people of Israel".

<sup>121</sup> *Gesetz und Geschichte. Untersuchungen zur Theologie der jüdischen Apokalyptik und der pharisäischen Orthodoxie* (Neukirchen, 1960). Cf. especially 77-88.

<sup>122</sup> Rössler, *op. cit.*, 87-88.

<sup>123</sup> This idea is only found in Sanh 10,1 and b B M 33b, but the idea is probably popular. Cf. Sjöberg, *op. cit.*, 118-119.

<sup>124</sup> Sjöberg (*op. cit.*, 120) quotes: Sanh 10,1-4; Tos Sanh 12,9-11; Abot 3,11.

<sup>125</sup> On this see Sjöberg, *op. cit.*, 76-78; 91.



and, if the proselyte is well considered, it is because he is no longer a pagan.<sup>126</sup>

The "just" are not sinless, but are characterized by the basic acceptance of and obedience to the Torah and their prompt repentance when they have transgressed some precept of the Law.<sup>127</sup> To be a "sinner" is to have an antagonistic attitude towards the Torah. Conversion can thus be spoken of as a turning to the Torah (identical with the will of God) or as a "taking on the yoke of the Covenant".<sup>128</sup>

Thus, in the Rabbinical literature the term **רשע**, far from losing the meaning it already had in the Pss, becomes even more strongly identified with an attitude towards the Torah: the **רשע** is the one who despises the Torah.<sup>129</sup>

e) *The **רשע** in Qumran*

Qumran presents a view of the **רשע** which is even more radical and sectarian. Mankind is divided into two opposed groups. The group to which one belongs is determined by one's attitude towards the Torah which has now become the exclusive possession of the **יהוד התורה**. The true meaning of the Torah of Moses is revealed only to the Sect. Consequently, all those who do not "convert" to this community, who do not accept and live its interpretation of the Torah, are **רשעים**.<sup>130</sup> All such are characterized as those who have rejected the Torah and are active enemies of those who live by it. Thus the **מרשעי ברית** (1QM 1,2)—the Jews who do not follow the Qumran interpretation of the Torah—are assimilated to the traditional enemies of Israel (Edom, Moab, Ammon, etc.), to the nations of iniquity (**גויי רשעה** 1QM 14,7; 15,2), to the community of godlessness (**עדת רשעה** 1QM 15,9), who are against the "sons of light" and will meet their destruction in the final battle. The judgement of God will reach not only the **גוים** but also **כל רשעי עמו** and will come about through the hand of those who have kept his commandments (1QpH 5,5), that is to say: the "Teacher of righteousness" and his followers. The opponent of the "Teacher of righteousness" (**מורה הצדק**) is the "godless Priest" (**הרשע הכהן**)—the issue which sets them against each other is the Torah (1QpH 8,8ff; 11,4-8; 12,2-5). The followers of the "godless Priest" and their like, the **רשעים**, will receive their retribution through the **אביונים**, the members of the Sect (1QM 11,13-14).

It is true that even the members of the Community, when making an act of confession, can consider themselves as belonging **לאדם רשעה** (1QS 11,9),<sup>131</sup> but it would be wrong to forget the context and to conclude that the opposition between the **צדיקים** and the **רשעים** is thereby done away with. Even the poet

<sup>126</sup> Sjöberg, *op. cit.*, 81-92.

<sup>127</sup> "Sie sind zwar nicht sündlos, aber sie sind dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass sie im grossen ganzen die Gebote der Tora erfüllen ..." Sjöberg, *op. cit.*, 152, n. 2.

<sup>128</sup> Id., *ibid.*, 150-151.

<sup>129</sup> This is also the view of Rengstorf, *art. cit.*, 326, 8ff.

<sup>130</sup> The texts which present this point of view are legion. A few of the most significant are: 1QS 5,10-11; 8,6f; 1QM 11,13-14; 1QH 4,34f; 15,17f; CD 19,6; 1QpH 5,11f.

<sup>131</sup> A similar thought is found in the ritual which was renewed each year. Cf. 1QS 1,25: **הרשענו אנו**.

of the Thanksgiving Psalms, who includes himself in what he says of man in general, deploring the weakness of human nature, does not fail to distinguish between the רשעים and the צדיקים.<sup>132</sup> He obviously considers himself among the former and describes his distress in terms of an attack made against him by the רשעים, before whom he stands firm in his devotion to the Torah.<sup>133</sup>

f) *The use of ἀμαρτωλός in the NT*

The terminology of the OT and Judaism has been preserved in the Synoptics. The δίκαιοι and ἀμαρτωλοί are two socially distinct<sup>134</sup> groups of people. The δίκαιος is the man who is blameless according to the Law,<sup>135</sup> the ἀμαρτωλοί are those who have a "schuldhaftes Verhalten gegenüber dem jüdischen Gesetz".<sup>136</sup> These traditional categories, current in the NT period, are taken over as a matter of fact by the NT and by Jesus himself. The Gentiles are referred to as ἀμαρτωλοί<sup>137</sup>—in keeping with the usage we have noticed in the OT and Judaism. Among the Jews, the Pharisees and those who observe the Law scrupulously are called δίκαιοι.<sup>138</sup>

The ἀμαρτωλοί are such in relation to the Law. They are either people who knowingly live an immoral life—in opposition to the Law (here belong the "publicans and sinners", prostitutes, robbers, etc.),<sup>139</sup> or those who are ignorant of the Law (עם הארץ) and consequently not strict followers of the Law in the Pharisaical sense.<sup>140</sup> Whether the word ἀμαρτωλός is used in the first or in the

<sup>132</sup> Cf. 1QH 4,38; 7,12; 15,15.17.

<sup>133</sup> 1QH 2,10f.12.24.36; 4,34ff; 5,17; 7,12; 17,21 (?).

<sup>134</sup> See the three lists of "sinners" given by J. Jeremias, "Zöllner und Sünder", ZNW 30 (1931) 293-300, 295-299. The "social" nature of these categories can be gathered from the sanctions imposed upon these "sinners" by society. The sinners of list two could not be called as witnesses (*art. cit.*, 298); those of list three lost all civil rights (*ibid.*, 299).

<sup>135</sup> G. Schrenk, TWNT II, art. δίκη, δίκαιος ..., 187, 23ff; 191, 28ff.

<sup>136</sup> Rengstorff, TWNT I, 331, 7f.

<sup>137</sup> Mk 14,41 (= Mt 26,45). Lk tries to avoid the "technical" sense and writes ἄνθρωποι ἀμαρτωλοί. That he is aware of this sense is shown at 6,33. The ἔθνηκοί of Mt 5,47 is substituted by ἀμαρτωλοί. The terms were equivalent. For ἀμαρτωλοί = Gentiles cf. also Gal 2,15.

<sup>138</sup> Mt 9,13; Mk 2,17; Lk 5,32; 15,7.

<sup>139</sup> In his careful study of the expression τελῶναι καὶ ἀμαρτωλοί, Jeremias has shown that "sinner" here must be understood in the restricted sense of people who, because of their profession (leading to dishonesty) or their immoral conduct, were condemned and despised by public opinion. This view is confirmed by: 1) the texts where τελῶναι καὶ ἀμαρτωλοί is found in the mouth of the populace (Mt 11,19; Lk 7,34; 19,7; 2) the cases in which τελῶναι is linked with "prostitutes" (Mt 21,31f), "pagans" (Mt 18,17) and "adulterers" (Lk 18,11).

<sup>140</sup> After the Maccabean revolt "Frömmigkeit" gradually came to be identified with "Gelehrsamkeit". Those who are ignorant of the Law are עמי הארץ, hardly to be distinguished for the Pharisees from the רשעים. Cf. Abot 2,5 אין בור ירה חטא and Tos Ber 7,18. Further Koeberle, *Sünde und Gnade*, 392f; Moore, *Judaism*, I, 60; II, 72f, and below, p. 103, n. 113.

second sense will depend upon whether the designation is found on the lips of the Pharisees or whether one is a *ἀμαρτωλός* in the eyes of the common people.<sup>141</sup>

The fact that the traditional distinction between "just" and "sinner" is adopted by the NT does not mean that it is not questioned.<sup>142</sup> Jesus adopts a harsh attitude precisely towards the "just" (the Pharisees in particular) and states that their "justice" is insufficient for entering the Kingdom of Heaven.

Besides the traditional meaning they retain, both *δίκαιος* and *ἀμαρτωλός* are given a new meaning in the NT. The new meaning given to *ἀμαρτωλός* is to be seen in the fact that it is now associated with *ἀμαρτία*. In this sense it designates man as separated from God, under the power of sin and in need of the redemptive grace of Christ. The word is used in this sense by Paul, but not by the Synoptics.<sup>143</sup> A new depth of meaning may be latent in the texts of Luke which seem to use *ἀμαρτωλός* in the sense we give to "sinner" (a man who commits sin and is in a state of sin).<sup>144</sup>

In general we can say that, if we except the Synoptics and Lk in particular, the word *ἀμαρτωλός* seems to be avoided by the writings of the NT, an indication that the term was too charged with a meaning foreign to the new order inaugurated by Christ: it was too closely related to a Jewish outlook and to the Jewish Law.<sup>145</sup>

g) *The "juridical" aspect of the root רשע in the OT and in Judaism*

There are further aspects of the term *רשע* which may be illuminating for understanding the Johannine use of *ἀμαρτωλός*.

*צדיק* and *רשע*, originally, were "juridical" terms rooted in the "Rechtsleben" of Israel. The "wicked" and the "just" were those proven juridically guilty or

<sup>141</sup> This does not apply to the expression *τελῶναι καὶ ἀμαρτωλοί*; see above, n. 139. Jeremias admits, however, (*art. cit.*, 293-294) that, in the mouth of the Pharisees, the word *ἀμαρτωλός* would normally designate an *עם הארץ*.

<sup>142</sup> Schlatter's words on Mt 9,13 are often repeated (cf. Rengstorff, *TWNT* I, 333; Schrenk, *TWNT* II, 191): the "just" are recognized "just" by Jesus and the NT. Yet these authors admit that it was precisely the "just" who, in the eyes of Jesus, were in need of conversion! (cf. Schrenk, *ibid.*, 191-192; Rengstorff, *ibid.*, 335). We do not wish to discuss this point here. It is obvious that, if the justice of the "righteous" were true "justice", Jesus would not have treated them with such severity. We should rather hold that Jesus and the NT agreed that the "just" were righteous according to the Law (cf. Phil 3,6-7!) in the spirit of Pharisaism, but considered such "justice" completely inadequate.

<sup>143</sup> The association is proper to Paul; cf. Rom 5,8.19; Gal 2,16ff. It is also found in 1 Tim 1,15.

<sup>144</sup> Lk 5,8; 13,2; 15,7.10; 18,13. It is not certain (vs. Rengstorff, *TWNT* I, 332, 27ff) that *ἀμαρτωλός*, in Lk 15,7.10; 18,13, simply means *ἡμαρτηκώς*.

<sup>145</sup> Rengstorff (*ibid.*, 326, 25ff) says that this is due to the "Ton der Überlegenheit" with which it was charged. Was it not rather due to the "Jewish" connotations of the word (designating, as it did, the Gentiles and those who were in some way "irregular" with respect to the Law) and that the Christians themselves were classified as *ἀμαρτωλοί* by the Jews?

innocent in a regular court of justice.<sup>146</sup> The two terms were gradually dissociated from the strict "judicial" context to which they owed their origin and acquired a broader meaning. The "just" and the "wicked" are no longer those who are declared innocent or guilty, but two "classes" of people, distinguished according to their basic attitude towards the Law. But the terms lose their "juridical" and "social" connotations neither in the OT nor in the Jewish tradition as a whole.

The רשע is one whose behaviour stands "condemned" in the eyes of God and his faithful followers. The norm remains the revealed will of God (the Torah). Since the "justice" of God, which wills and effects the salvation of the "just" and the condemnation of the "wicked", is put in question and defied by the רשע, God is bound by his "justice" to vindicate the "right".<sup>147</sup> He "judges" and, in this "judgement", condemns the evildoer and rewards the just. The punishment of the evildoer is at times presented as the result of his own actions, at times as the result of direct divine intervention.<sup>148</sup> But often it is the task of society itself.<sup>149</sup> Here the (anti-)social aspect of the wicked's activity comes to light. By his behaviour, the רשע goes against society.<sup>150</sup> He is living within a society the fundamental norms of which he rejects; he is in a society without being part of it. The community must therefore take action against him (in pre-exilic society in order not to become involved in his guilt—"collective" view of sin; in post-exilic society because the society is constituted by the Law—the "sinner" is an apostate, an "outsider", an enemy of the nation). The רשע must be "cut off" (banished), "cursed" (ארר formulas);<sup>151</sup> social intercourse with him must be curtailed or avoided completely.

In Judaism this attitude towards the רשעים prevailed right through to the NT period and afterwards. We find it reflected not only in Qumran (where it acquires an esoteric colouring),<sup>152</sup> but in the Synoptics<sup>153</sup> and in the Jewish and Rabbinic sources<sup>154</sup> as well.

<sup>146</sup> Descamps, *art. cit.*, 1422-1425; Köhler, *Theol.*, 154; Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 265, n. 2.

<sup>147</sup> "In der altisraelitischen Zeit scheint man ... von Gottes Gerechtigkeit nur mit Bezug auf seine Hilfe gegen die äusseren Feinde geredet zu haben". Eichrodt, *Theol.* I, 156. This changes in the post-exilic literature. The "sinner" is not only the non-Israelite, but also the Israelites "die die Ordnung menschlichen und göttlichen Rechts frevelhaft und frech übertreten". *Ibid.*, 160f.

<sup>148</sup> Divine intervention: Ps 75,9ff; Job 40,12-14; Jer 25,31. K. Koch ("Gibt es ein Vergeltungsdogma im AT?") *ZThK* 52 (1955) 1-42 tends to do away with any divine intervention—it is "sin" which brings its own "wages" with it.

<sup>149</sup> Society must either kill or reject the evildoer. Cf. W. Zimmerli, "Die Eigenart der prophetischen Rede des Ezechiel", *ZAW* 66 (1954) 1-26.

<sup>150</sup> Köhler rightly defines the צדיק as "wer zur Gemeinschaft steht und wer für die Gemeinschaft eintritt" (*Theol.*, 16). Conversely, the רשע is an "enemy", a threat to society, an "outlaw".

<sup>151</sup> On the use of the two formulas, which are intimately connected, see Zimmerli, *art. cit.*, 13ff. On the ארר formulas, see further J. Scharbert, "'Fluchen' und 'Segnen' im Alten Testament", *Bib* 39 (1958) 1-26.

<sup>152</sup> 1QS 6,25; 7,1.3.5.16; 8,16f.22f.24; CD 9,21.23; etc.

<sup>153</sup> Cf. Jeremias, *art. cit.*

<sup>154</sup> Cf. *Str.-Bill.*, II, 509-518; Moore, *Judaism*, II, 159-160; also Jeremias, *art. cit.*, 295-299.

## C) 'Αμαρτωλός in Jn 9

In view of the consistency of meaning which the term  $\alpha\mu\alpha\rho\tau\omega\lambda\acute{o}\varsigma$  (ἀμαρτωλός) has in the canonical and non-canonical writings examined, and which extends from the pre-exilic period right through to the NT period and afterwards, it would be surprising if ἀμαρτωλός were to be used by Jn with any other meaning than the one seen so far. The term itself is our first guarantee, but there are indications in Jn 9 which further warn against giving ἀμαρτωλός a new shade of meaning.

'Αμαρτωλός in Jn 9 is: 1) explicitly connected with the Law (Sabbath); 2) found on the lips of the Pharisees; 3) opposed to "doing the will of God" (τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιεῖν); 4) distinguished by Jn from ἀμαρτίαν ἔχειν.

1) The condemnation of Jesus as a ἀμαρτωλός is bound to his attitude towards the Law, in this specific case to the Sabbath. In this Jn is faithful to primitive tradition. The Synoptics also present Jesus' behaviour as unconventional and not in conformity with the Law. It may be true, as H. Braun holds,<sup>155</sup> that the historical Jesus did not *wish* to appear as an innovator of the Torah, but his interpretation of the Torah (and his manner of living) did, *de facto*, go against it. His attitude towards the Law was rather free and this freedom came to light especially in his attitude towards cultic purity and towards the Sabbath.<sup>156</sup>

It is especially Jesus' attitude towards the Sabbath which in the primitive tradition is recorded as causing scandal and giving rise to conflicts with the Pharisees.<sup>157</sup> Even though the Sabbath conflicts, as related in the Gospels,<sup>158</sup> are held by some to be later constructions of the Community, they are recognized as being firmly rooted in the critical attitude Jesus himself had assumed towards the Sabbath observance.<sup>159</sup> It is likewise certain that this led to difficulties with the Jewish authorities. The early Church saw a typological significance

<sup>155</sup> H. Braun, *Spätjüdisch-häretischer und frühchristlicher Radikalismus* (Tübingen, 1969), II, 13.

<sup>156</sup> Braun, *ibid.*, II, 15; 62ff.

<sup>157</sup> Cf. E. Lohse, *TWNT* VII, art. *σάββατον*, 21-29.

<sup>158</sup> Mk 2,23-28, Par; Mk 3,1-6, Par; Lk 13,10-17; 14,1-6.

<sup>159</sup> Cf. R. Bultmann, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* (Göttingen, 1970), 40. H. Braun, *op. cit.*, II, 70, n. 1.

in these conflicts and had recourse to them to justify its attitude towards the Sabbath.<sup>160</sup>

There is a noteworthy divergence between the way in which Jn and the Synoptics present the Sabbath conflicts. In the Synoptic tradition Jesus is never explicitly accused of violating the Sabbath. In Mk 2,3ff, Par no accusation is made, not even implicitly, against Jesus. In Mk 3,1ff, Par we learn that the Pharisees, as a result of the Sabbath healing and Jesus' words, decide to destroy him; no explicit accusation is made, even though Jesus asks the question: "Is it licit?" (cf. also Lk 14,1). In Lk 13,10ff the head of the Synagogue reprimands the people, not Jesus, and tells them to come to be healed on another day. The attitude of the Pharisees towards the disregard the *disciples* show for the Sabbath is quite different. The Pharisees complain: "Why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" (Mk 2,24, Par).

The accusation the Pharisees move against Jesus in Jn (ἐλθεν τὸ σάββατον ... τὸ σάββατον οὐ τηρεῖ) is stronger and more direct than that we have in the Synoptics. So is the affirmation: οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἁμαρτωλὸς ἐστίν. In the Synoptics Jesus is accused of associating with "sinners" (in the strict sense of the word);<sup>161</sup> he is never accused of being a ἁμαρτωλός, but only a φίλος ἁμαρτωλῶν.<sup>162</sup> The impression one receives is that Jn purposefully accentuates the condemnatory attitude the Pharisees assume towards Jesus' Sabbath work.

2) It would have been unthinkable for Jn to have even the Pharisees accuse Jesus of "sin" (see below—4). To have the Pharisees accuse Jesus of being a ἁμαρτωλός is something far different from having them accuse Jesus of being a "sinner" in the sense we give the word (being in "sin", etc.; see below—4). The term used, the context in which it is used, and those by whom it is used manifest the true intention of the evangelist. Not only is ἁμαρτωλός used in

<sup>160</sup> This is the case in Mt. The argumentation contained in Mt 13,9-14 shows that the community was still in conflict with the Synagogue concerning the Sabbath. Cf. G. D. Kilpatrick, *The Origins of the Gospel according to St. Matthew* (Oxford, 1946), 116. G. Barth ("Das Gesetzesverständnis des Evangelisten Matthäus", in: *Ueberslieferung und Auslegung im Matthäus-Evangelium* (Neukirchen, 1965), 75) shares this view. The perspective in Lk is different. Cf. E. Lohse, "Lukas als Theologe der Heilsgeschichte", *EvTheol* 14 (1954) 256-276, 266ff.

<sup>161</sup> Mk 2,15ff (= Mt 9,10ff; Lk 5,29ff); Lk 15,2ff.

<sup>162</sup> Mk 11,19 = Lk 7,34.

conjunction with the (apparent) Sabbath violation; it is also found on the lips of the Pharisees. Jn 9,14-34 presents Rabbinical reasoning in its purest form (especially vv. 24-34 where the term occurs)—the outlook and terms of reference of the Pharisees being adopted even by the disciple of Jesus. It is the Pharisees (the Jews) who are accusing Jesus of being a *ἁμαρτωλός* and the accusation is based on his attitude towards the Sabbath. There can be little doubt that the Pharisees are taking over the term *ἁμαρτωλός* from Jewish tradition and are applying it to Jesus in its traditional sense—the sense it has in the OT, Judaism and in the Rabbinical writings. '*Ἀμαρτωλός ἐστίν*' represents a judgement based upon a specific understanding of Jesus' relationship to the Law: he is a "sinner" because he does not have a correct attitude toward the Law, because he habitually violates the Sabbath.

Being used by the Pharisees, *ἁμαρτωλός* furthermore does not have the meaning it would have on the lips of the common people. It does not designate a person who belongs to an "immoral" class of individuals such as adulterers, thieves, robbers, etc.,<sup>163</sup> but an *עם הארץ*—a person who does not have a correct understanding of and attitude toward the Torah and whose life does not conform to the Law of Moses.<sup>164</sup>

3) At Jn 9,31 *ἁμαρτωλός* is opposed to *τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν* and to *θεοσεβής*. We are obviously dealing with the pair *רשע-צדיק*, for we have seen that the *צדיק* is one who "does the will of God" (follows the Law), whereas the *רשע* is one who habitually goes against the divine will (Law)—the *ἁμαρτωλός*, *ἀσεβής*.

The Greek term used for *צדיק* presents somewhat of a difficulty because the pair *רשע-צדיק* is translated by *ἁμαρτωλός (ἀσεβής)—δίκαιος* in the LXX and not by *ἁμαρτωλός—θεοσεβής*.<sup>165</sup> It must be noted, however, that the pair *ἁμαρτωλός*

<sup>163</sup> See p. 43, n. 141.

<sup>164</sup> Rengstorff (*TWNT* I, 332) states that Jesus is considered a "sinner" (*ἁμαρτωλός*) "weil er die pharisäische Sabbatkasuistik nicht anerkennt". This does not do justice to Jn's presentation of Jesus' violations of the Sabbath. We may speak of Pharisaical "Sabbatkasuistik" in the incident of the ears of grain plucked by the disciples in Mk 2,23ff (cf. *Str.-Bill.*, I, 615f and 617, n. f), but certainly not for the carrying of the mat (which the Lord commanded)—such an act was forbidden in the OT (Jer 17,19-27; Neh 13,15-19; cf. Ex 21,12-17; Num 15,32-36) and not only by the Pharisaical tradition.

<sup>165</sup> In the LXX the opposite of *ἁμαρτωλός (ἀσεβής, רשע)* is *εὐσεβής*, never *θεοσεβής* (but cf. Sir 1,24: *βδέλυγμα δὲ ἁμαρτωλῶ θεοσέβεια*).

(ἀσεβής)—εὐσεβής is also found<sup>166</sup> and that (although not in the LXX)<sup>167</sup> εὐσεβής and θεοσεβής are practically synonymous.<sup>168</sup> If Jn is reflecting the LXX it would have been more natural for him to use εὐσεβής rather than θεοσεβής, but he need not be reflecting the LXX and may be using εὐσεβής as a synonym for θεοσεβής (δικαίος—צדיק).

Jn may also have used θεοσεβής because of other associations it had for him or other possibilities it presented. Θεοσεβής suggests the idea of the "fear of God" (with which it is invariably linked in the LXX) and "fear of the Lord" in the OT is equivalent to obeying the divine will (Law).<sup>169</sup> The "fear of the Lord" is also a confidence in God's help which gives a claim to being heard by him.<sup>170</sup> Bultmann is right in saying that Jn here combines the Greek θεοσεβής with the Jewish "to do his will",<sup>171</sup> but the idea this terminology reflects is typically Jewish and is rooted in the OT.

We wish to point out one last possible association the term may have had for

<sup>166</sup> Εὐσεβής is opposed to ἀσεβής in Prov 12,12; 13,19; Eccl 3,6; to ἀμαρτωλός in Sir 11,22; 13,17; 16,13; 33,14; 39,27.

<sup>167</sup> In the LXX, insofar as it is possible to judge from the few cases in which θεοσεβής and εὐσεβής are found as translations, the two words are not used interchangeably. Of the 10× in which εὐσεβής translates a Hebrew equivalent, it corresponds 8× (if we include Heb. Sir) to צדיק, 1× to חסיד and 1× to נדיב. Θεοσεβής, found 4× only as translation of the MT, always corresponds to ירא אלהים (Ex 18,21; Job 1,1.8; 2,3). This divergence apparently does not apply to θεοσέβεια and εὐσέβεια. Εὐσέβεια translates יראת יהוה and יראה יהוה at Prov 1,7; Is 11,2; 33,6; θεοσέβεια translates (אלוהים) יראת יהוה in Gen 20,11 and Job 28,28.

<sup>168</sup> Θεοσεβής and εὐσεβής are synonyms, although in θεοσεβής piety towards God is implied, whereas εὐσεβής has both this meaning and that of piety towards parents and others (cf. R. C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament* (r.p. London, 1961), 161f). This distinction is found in the LXX. Θεοσέβεια, θεοσεβής are found as renderings for יראת יהוה and ירא אלהים (Gen 20,11; Ex 18,21; Job 1,1.8; 2,3; 28,28). When εὐσέβεια corresponds to יראה יהוה it is qualified (εὐσέβεια εἰς θεόν—Prov 1,7; εὐσέβεια πρὸς τὸν κύριον—Is 33,6), but can be found without qualification (εὐσέβεια = יראת יהוה Is 11,2).

<sup>169</sup> Cf. G. von Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (München, 1966-68), II, 223; Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 187f. This relationship to the Law (divine will) is also to be found in the use of θεοσέβεια (which, as we have seen, translates יראת יהוה). The word is found relatively frequently in conjunction with σοφία (Job 28,28: ἡ θεοσέβειά ἐστιν σοφία; cf. also Prov 1,7; 9,10 and comp. Wisd 10,12) which, in its turn, is closely connected with the Law. The combination "fear of the Lord" and "walking in his ways" in admonitions to follow the Law is almost a fixed formula in the OT (cf. Dt 10, 12,20; Jos 24,14, etc.) and "fear of the Lord" is also found associated directly with obedience to the commandments (cf. Sir 2,15). The Wisdom literature often associates fear of the Lord with avoidance of evil (Prov 3,7; 8,13; 14,2; 16,6; Job 1,8). In 4 Macc θεοσέβεια is used to designate Judaism, the "true religion", (7,6; 17,15) as opposed to paganism. Later, θεοσεβής becomes a designation for Jews (see below, n. 172).

<sup>170</sup> G. Bertram, *TWNT* III, art. θεοσεβής, 125, 20ff; comp. Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 188.

<sup>171</sup> Comm., 256, n. 2.



Jn. *θεοσεβής* is frequently found in Jewish inscriptions of the Hellenistic and Roman periods as a designation for the Jews. They were considered *θεοσεβείς* in a special sense.<sup>172</sup> If Jn is reflecting this usage, the word *θεοσεβής* is perfectly indicated to designate Jesus as one who is not opposed to the Law, but faithful to the divine will.

4) At Jn 8,46 Jn does not allow the Jews to attempt to convict Jesus of "sin" (*ἁμαρτία*), but he allows the Pharisees at Jn 9,24ff to attempt to convict him of being a "sinner" (*ἁμαρτωλός*). The discrepancy between the two texts was noticed by commentators from the beginning.<sup>173</sup> At 8,46 Jesus asks: "Which one of you can convict me of sin?" No one comes forth to make such an attempt. Yet the charges of blasphemy and violation of the Sabbath had already been made (Jn 5,17; 7,23f) and one would expect these charges to be brought forth against Jesus. To say that the Pharisees "accuse" but cannot "prove", "demonstrate", is to beg the issue.<sup>174</sup> Jn will show that the Pharisees are unable to convict Jesus of being

<sup>172</sup> Cf. Bertram, *TWNT* III, 125-126 and above, p. 48, n. 168.

<sup>173</sup> Of the ancient commentaries consulted (Cyril Alex., Chrysostom, Augustine, Theodore Mops., Euthymius Zig., Theophylact, Nonnus Pan., Beda, Alcuinus, Rupertus, Toletus, Maldonatus), only *Scholia Vetera* (P.G. 106, ad loc.) and Thomas Aq. (*Super Evangelium S. Ioannis Lectura* (Marietti-Romae, 1952), ad loc.) mention this. To the question: Why did the Jews not say anything when Jesus asked—Which of you can convict me of sin?—the author of *Scholia Vetera* answers: "Because what they now say is nonsense (*ὥστε νῦν ματαιολογοῦσι*)". Thomas writes: "Sed vere mendacium locutus est stylus Pharisaeorum ... nam supra 8,46 eundem de peccato arguere non potuerunt ..." The modern commentators consulted (Schanz, W. Bauer, Loisy (1st ed.), Lagrange, Westcott, Bultmann, Lightfoot, Bernard, Hoskyns, Schlatter, Dodd, Barrett, Brown, Strathmann, Schulz) do not even draw attention to the discrepancy.

<sup>174</sup> Jesus was guilty of many "sins" in the eyes of the Jews and of the Jewish Law. It is wrong to affirm that, at 8,46, "folgt aus dem Verstummen der Juden, dass sie ihn keiner Tatsünde zeihen konnten ..." (B. Weiss, *Das Johannes-Evangelium*, Meyers Kommentar, 2 (Göttingen, 1902), ad loc.; see also Schlatter, Lightfoot, Hoskyns—ad loc.) or that the Jews could prove nothing, and knew it (Bernard, ad loc.; see also Westcott, Barrett—ad loc.). Conscious of the fact that Jesus was guilty of "sin" in the "technical" sense, a number of commentators emphasize that Jesus is not challenging the Jews to "accuse" him of sin (something they have already done and would not fail to do again), but to "convict" him of sin by proving their allegations (cf. *Scholia Vetera*, Toletus, Maldonatus, W. Bauer, Barrett—ad 8,46). Although *ἐλέγχειν* can mean "to prove" as well as "to accuse", this expedient must be rejected (cf. the following notes). It is also wrong to affirm that, at 8,46, Jn is speaking of sin "... probably, from the connection as measured by the Law" (Westcott, ad loc.).

a ἁμαρτωλός; yet, in their eyes he is a ἁμαρτωλός and they do accuse and try to convict him as such.<sup>175</sup>

What did the evangelist wish to express by not having the Jews—who elsewhere (Jn 5,16-18; 7,23f; 9,24) are absolutely convinced (οἶδαμεν) that Jesus is a ἁμαρτωλός and do not hesitate to accuse and try to convict him—respond to the challenge of Jesus: “Which of you can convict me of sin?”<sup>176</sup> Is the attempt to convict Jesus of “sin” (ἁμαρτία) and the attempt to convict him of being a “sinner” (ἁμαρτωλός) the same thing? The answer will depend on the meaning one gives to ἁμαρτία and ἁμαρτωλός. In the OT, Judaism and the NT ἁμαρτία (ἁρπ) and ἁμαρτωλός (ἁρπ) diverge conspicuously in meaning. Is Jn using ἁμαρτίαν ἔχειν and ἁμαρτωλός εἶναι indiscriminately?

The meaning of ἁμαρτία in Jn is no longer that of the OT. It is exactly the opposite with ἁμαρτωλός which, as has been shown, remains correlated to the Law of Moses. The Pharisees can and must accuse and try to “convict” Jesus of being a ἁμαρτωλός; Jn would never allow them to so much as accuse Jesus περὶ ἁμαρτίας. The context of 8,46 and the silence of the Jews indicates that Jn wishes to show that such a thought is absurd and such an accusation impossible.<sup>177</sup> The most the Pharisees can do is accuse Jesus of having

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<sup>175</sup> In the light of the texts we have mentioned and Jn 9 in particular it is impossible to hold (with Th. Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (Leipzig-Erlangen, 5-6 1921), ad Jn 8,46) that the Jews had accused Jesus repeatedly “aber einen ernstlichen und beharrlichen Versuch zu beweisen, dass er ein sündhafter und gottloser Mensch sei, haben sie weder damals noch später gemacht”. On the contrary! Jn’s purpose is to show that such an attempt *was* made and failed miserably.

<sup>176</sup> The words of Bernard: “No answer to this challenge is recorded. Probably no answer *was* attempted. His hearers did not understand, of course, that Jesus was literally χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας (Heb 4,15); but they could prove nothing, and they knew it” (ad Jn 8,46), do not go deep enough. The evangelist does know that Jesus is “sinless” and the Jews attempt no answer because he attributes to them the recognition of Christ’s sinlessness he himself had.

<sup>177</sup> Such statements as: “Admittedly no suggestion of sin has been alleged against him” (Lightfoot, ad 8,46); “Die Vorwürfe, die Jesus gemacht werden, stellten aber nie ein verwerfliches Handeln fest” (Schlatter, ad 8,46); or that of Bernard quoted in the preceding note, cannot be defended *unless* one distinguishes (and these authors do not!) between ἁμαρτία and the charges of violation of the Law (which, in the mind of the Jews, show that Jesus is a “sinner”—but which Jn does not qualify as ἁμαρτία, as the Jews would).

a liberal attitude toward the Law (of being a *ἁμαρτωλός*).<sup>178</sup> With "sin" it is another matter.

At Jn 8,46 we have the Johannine point of view of "sin": Jesus is "from above", "not of this world"; he is *χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας* and no one would dare accuse him of "sin". The Jews are "from below", "of this world", children of the devil and will die in the sin which characterizes their very being, unless they believe and are "reborn". At Jn 9,24 we have the Jewish, Pharisaical point of view—it is the Law which determines whether one is a "sinner" or not: Jesus is a "sinner" because he does not keep the Sabbath. The discrepancy between Jn 8,46 and Jn 9,24 shows that to declare Jesus is a *ἁμαρτωλός* and to accuse him of "sin" (*ἁμαρτία*) are two quite distinct issues for Jn.

### *Conclusion*

The disciples of Moses are applying the Law to Jesus as if he were an ordinary Jew and are accusing him of being a *ἁμαρτωλός* because of his persistent disregard for the Sabbath. Although they fail to prove their point,<sup>179</sup> the accusation they make is a very grave accusation. In the OT and Judaism, to say that a man is a *ἁμαρτωλός* (עש) is more serious than to say he has committed "sin" or is in a state of "sin". Jn can reverse the set of values contained in the OT distinction between the roots עש and חט (between *ἁμαρτωλός* and *ἁμαρτία*) because the whole order to which the OT terminology is bound has been changed. The reader knows that in the case of Jesus (and of his followers) the will of God is no longer identical with the Law. For Jn the Law, in its Jewish interpretation, is no valid criterion for "judging" Jesus (or his followers).

Jn flatly denies that Jesus can be accused of "sin", but he allows

<sup>178</sup> That "technically" (i.e., in the traditional understanding of the Law) Jesus has committed transgressions ("sins") and that these can easily be proven is emphasized à outrance" by Jn. Barrett is unquestionably right in affirming: "There is no doubt ... that Jesus had transgressed the Law, and therefore was in the technical sense a *ἁμαρτωλός*" (ad 9,24).

<sup>179</sup> To affirm: "Damit ... behauptet (Jesus) auch nicht, dass es den Juden nicht gelinge, ihn einer Sünde zu überführen", with Zahn (ad 8,46) is to misconstrue the intention of the evangelist. He wishes to show that the Jews 1) neither accuse nor try to convict Jesus of "sin" (*ἁμαρτία*); 2) accuse him of being a *ἁμαρτωλός* (of behaving contrary to the Law which for the Jews means to "sin" habitually), but cannot prove this because their understanding of the Law (of Jesus) is insufficient.

the Pharisees to accuse him of being a "sinner". To be *ἀμαρτωλοί* in the eyes of the Pharisees (Jews) has become for the Christians a matter of fact and, to them, only indicates that they are worthy disciples of Jesus, who likewise had been (was) considered a *ἀμαρτωλός* by the Pharisees (Jews). Like their Master, they must be prepared to accept the consequences of the "judgement" the "Jews" pronounce upon them in the name of a false interpretation of the Law : they are "sinners", apostates and must be banished from the Jewish Community (Jn 9,22.34f).

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE CHARGE OF BLASPHEMY. DOES THE LAW CONDEMN JESUS FOR CLAIMING TO BE THE SON OF GOD ?

In the section which dealt with the violation of the Sabbath it was impossible to avoid referring to the "words" which accompanied the Sabbath healings since they disclosed the full significance of the "signs". However, for the sake of clarity, we neglected to examine the full import of Jn 5,17-18. The words with which Jesus attempts to justify his Sabbath work are interpreted as a new violation of the Law—blasphemy. It is to this "charge" that we now wish to turn our attention.

There is an important connection between the Sabbath question and the accusation of blasphemy made against Jesus. If Jesus has authority over the Sabbath, it is because he is the "Son of God". In order to prove Jesus is a "sinner" (a violator of the Sabbath), the Jews would first have to disprove his claim to divine origin. They would have to convict him of blasphemy, which is exactly what they will now attempt to do.

In the Synoptics Jesus is condemned to death on a charge of blasphemy<sup>1</sup> (Mk 14,64, Par) because he claimed to be the Messiah without giving any signs of power.<sup>2</sup> As in the case of the Sabbath violations, Jn seems to be reflecting primitive tradition quite faithfully when he presents the Jews as persecuting and prosecuting Jesus on a charge of blasphemy. But in the Fourth Gospel there are much better grounds than in the Synoptics for making such a charge against Jesus and the point of view is quite different.

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<sup>1</sup> Contrary to the OT usage blasphemy in the NT is characterized by the idea of any affirmation which puts the power and majesty of God into question. Cf. H. W. Beyer, *TWNT* I, art. βλασφημέω, 620-623; esp. 621, 48ff.

<sup>2</sup> J. Blinzler (*Der Prozess Jesu* (Regensburg, 1969), 152-156) holds that the claim of being the Messiah was sufficient to warrant condemnation as a blasphemer because : 1) pronouncement of the divine name was a condition introduced later (Sanh 7,5); 2) the judgement of the Jews was not unbiased; 3) being in the power of the Jews, Jesus must needs have appeared to be a false Messiah, powerless as he seemed to be.

## 1. JN 5,17-18

The primitive community, we have said, saw a typological significance in the conflicts of Jesus with the Jews over the Sabbath and had recourse to them to justify their attitude towards the Sabbath.<sup>3</sup> The arguments advanced against a strict observance of the Sabbath were, in their most primitive form, "humanitarian" in nature: the Sabbath is made for man, not man for the Sabbath (Mk 2,27).<sup>4</sup> However, in a *logion* which is probably not an authentic saying of Jesus,<sup>5</sup> a christological foundation may be found: the Son of Man is Lord over the Sabbath (Mk 2,28).<sup>6</sup>

In Jn 5,17 the argument advanced by Jesus in defence of his liberal attitude goes far beyond the "humanitarian" argument and even beyond the christological foundation found in Mk 2,28, Par. The cryptic saying of Jesus must be understood in the light of speculations and debates which arose in Jewish theology concerning the meaning to be given to Gen 2,3. It would seem that Jn is reflecting a Jewish tradition<sup>7</sup> according to which God does not rest from his "work on the wicked and his work on the righteous", from giving life and judging, even on the Sabbath.<sup>8</sup> The import of v. 17 would be readily intelligible to a Jew, as the editorial comment (v. 18) shows.

Bligh<sup>9</sup> suggests that the Jews desire to kill Jesus not because he calls God his Father, but because he does so in a context in which he claims to be above the Sabbath. This is accurate insofar as Jesus, by calling God his Father in the context of the Sabbath dispute, is claiming a unique relationship to him: that, as Son, he shares in the perpetual divine activity, which does not cease on the Sabbath.

<sup>3</sup> See what has been said in Chapter One, pp. 45f. and see below, pp. 492ff.

<sup>4</sup> Comp. Lk 13,15; 14,5.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. V. Taylor, *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (London, 1959), ad loc.

<sup>6</sup> It is possible that one should read: "man is lord over the Sabbath", but the christological interpretation seems preferable. Cf. Taylor, *op. cit.*, ad loc., and comp. Mt 12,5-6.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Str.-Bill.*, II, 461 (ad Jn 5,17); Dodd, *Interpretation*, 320-323. The controversy recorded in Ex R 30,9 and which presumably took place around 95 A.D. shows that Rabbinic theology had dealt with the question of God's Sabbath work before Jn was written.

<sup>8</sup> The words (Gen R 11,10) are attributed to R. Hoshaja (c. 225 A.D.). Cf. *Str.-Bill.*, II, 461.

<sup>9</sup> J. Bligh, "Jesus in Jerusalem", *HeythJour* 4 (1963) 115-134; 125.

However, we know from the rest of the Gospel that, when Jesus calls God his Father (even when there is no question of Jesus' power over the Sabbath), he thereby indicates that he has a special relationship to God.<sup>10</sup> Jn can therefore explain the words: *ὁ πατήρ μου ἕως ἄρτι ἐργάζεται, καὶ ἐγὼ ἐργάζομαι* by: *πατέρα ἴδιον ἔλεγεν τὸν θεόν* and by: *ἴσον ἑαυτὸν ποιῶν τῷ θεῷ*. This means that, for Jesus, to call God his Father is equivalent to claiming unity of action with God, equality with God and, consequently, power over the Sabbath. The error of the Jews consists in misinterpreting the claim of Jesus as an attack on God's glory (whereas the reader knows that God is glorified in and through the acknowledgement of Jesus' divine origin and Sonship), as if Jesus were setting himself up as a rival to God.

The discourse of vv. 19ff attempts to clarify the issue. The equality of Jesus is his total dependence upon the Father. He has nothing that he has not received, all he has belongs to the Father (17,10); he can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing (5,19). If he "judges" and "gives life", it is only because this has been "given" to him by the Father (5,21f.26f). Correlatively, however, this means that Jesus does all the Father does (5,19). The Father shows Jesus all he does (5,20), he holds back nothing from him; everything the Father has belongs to Jesus (17,10). Jesus, like the Father, judges and gives life, has life in himself (5,21f.26f). It is therefore the will of the Father that all honour the Son as they honour the Father (5,23). It is impossible to honour the Father without honouring the Son; he who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father (5,23).

In order to admit the validity of Jesus' self-justification, one must penetrate the mystery of his person by accepting his "word" of self-revelation. This is precisely what the Jews are unable to do. Because of their lack of faith, they are in no position to accept the statement made in v. 17, nor will their attitude be affected by Jesus' great discourse (vv. 19ff). For the Jews (v. 18), Jesus is merely adding blasphemy to violation of the Sabbath. The *διὰ τοῦτο οὐκ ἂν μάλλον*

<sup>10</sup> Even if we do not give special emphasis to the *ἴδιον* at Jn 5,18 (emphasis which it *can* have—cf. *Blass-Deb.*, § 286 and comp. Jn 5,43; 7,18), the fact remains that God is the Father of Jesus in a unique sense. Jesus alone in Jn is called *υἱός (τοῦ) θεοῦ*; for Christians the word *τέκνα* is used. Jn 20,17 ("I am ascending to my Father and your Father", not: "to our Father") makes a distinction: the disciples become children of God (*τέκνα*) by sharing in the glory of the Son of God (*υἱός*), after the completion of his earthly work.

ἐξήτουν αὐτὸν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἀποκτεῖναι could mean that the new offence adds to their determination to kill Jesus, more probably it means that the words of Jesus appear even more outrageous to them than the deed. Further on in the Gospel, the Sabbath healing will be forgotten and Jesus' claim to be the Son of God will become the only motivation for his persecution (cf. Jn 10,32f).

## 2. JN 8,58

In Jn 8,59 the Jews seek to stone Jesus as a result of his assertion : *πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι ἐγὼ εἰμί* (v. 58). The reaction indicates that the words of Jesus are construed as blasphemy. The Law prescribed that blasphemers be stoned to death.<sup>11</sup>

In order to appreciate the importance of Jn 8,58f as an illustration and expansion of the thought already contained in Jn 5,17-18, two things must be considered : 1) the references to Jesus' divine Sonship (Jn 8,19.27.54f); 2) the use of the absolute *ἐγὼ εἰμι* formula (Jn 8,24.28.58). They correspond perfectly to Jn 5,17-18, where Jesus is considered (although this is not explicitly stated) a blasphemer because : 1) *πατέρα ἴδιον ἔλεγεν τὸν θεόν*; 2) *ἴσον ἑαυτὸν ποιῶν τῷ θεῷ*.

The affirmation of Jesus at v. 58 (*ἐγὼ εἰμι*) and the attempt to stone him (v. 59) bring Jn 7-8 to a climax and give us the most precious indication that these two chapters constitute a *unit* within which the action of the Jews at 8,59 is to be understood. In 8,59 *Ἰησοῦς δὲ ἐκρύβη καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ* refers back to Jn 7,10.14 : *ἀνέβη ... ἐν κρυπτῷ*; *ἀνέβη Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὸ ἱερόν*.

There are other indications of *literary unity*,<sup>12</sup> but the *thematic unity* is much more important to us. It is given precisely by the question of Jesus' identity (Son of God—equal to God 8,58) which becomes the reason for the condemnation of Jesus as a blasphemer by the Jews and culminates in their attempt to stone him (8,59!).

During the Feast of the Tabernacles, Jesus manifests himself as

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Lev 24,16; Num 15,30f; 1 K 21,10.

<sup>12</sup> a) 7,16 is taken up by 8,28; 7,20 by 8,48.52; 7,28 by 8,42; 7,29 by 8,55; 7,33f by 8,21. b) Jn 7-8 contain seven dialogues which are very similar in character : 7,14-24; 25-36; 37-44; 45-52; 8,12-20; 21-30; 31-59. In their rapid exchanges of debate and polemical tone they are unusual even in the Fourth Gospel. c) Constant reference is made to the threats against the life of Jesus : 7,1.13.19.25.30.32.44; 8,20.37.40.59. Cf. Dodd, *Interpretation*, 346-348. The references to the attempts made against the life of Jesus which Dodd gives fail to mention Jn 8,20.



the "life" and the "light", but these two attributes are shown to be the result of *who he is*.<sup>13</sup> He is presented as he who gives life, light, truth, freedom, *because* he is the Son of God, He who is. The many oppositions (falsehood-truth; slavery-freedom; death-life; sinfulness-sinlessness) can be fully appreciated in their unity only if the themes of light and life are traced to their source. The elaborate attempt to show that the Jews are not children of Abraham or of God, but of the devil, can be grasped only within this context.

The dramatic unity of Jn 7-8, which culminates in 8,58-59, is obtained through the progressive disclosure of Jesus' identity.

#### A) *God, the Father of Jesus. The divine Sonship of Jesus*

It is astonishing to notice that the word *πατήρ* for "God" is not to be found in Jn 7. The word is relatively rare in the first four chapters of the Gospel (except in Jn 4, where it does not refer to God in three cases out of six), but in chapters 5 and 6 it is very frequent and it is even more frequent in chapter 8.<sup>14</sup> The absence of *πατήρ* to designate God in Jn 7 is therefore all the more conspicuous. One can understand why it should not occur in Jn 9 and Jn 19, where Jesus hardly utters a word, but the many words of Jesus in Jn 7 and the thematic material of this chapter render an omission of *πατήρ* due to chance almost impossible. The topical content and vocabulary would seem to favour the use of *πατήρ* rather than hinder it.

This can best be seen by comparing 7,28 with 8,16.18.(26).(29). Jn 7,28 has *ὁ πέμψας με* 8,16.18 have *ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ*.

In Jn 8,26.29 we do not find *ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ* but *ὁ πέμψας με*; yet there is an obvious reason why the *πατήρ* should be omitted. The *ὁ πέμψας με* in 8,26 is followed by: *οὐκ ἔγνωσαν ὅτι τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῖς ἔλεγεν* and in 8,29 the word *πατήρ* immediately precedes the *ὁ πέμψας με: καθὼς ἐδίδαξέν με ὁ πατήρ ταῦτα λαλῶ. καὶ ὁ πέμψας με μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐστίν*.

It must further be emphasized that *ὁ πέμψας με* (in the *nominative*) is *always* followed by *πατήρ* in Jn,<sup>15</sup> except at 7,28 (cf. 5,37; 6,44; 8,16.18.(26).(29); 12,49). If one should not necessarily expect to find *πατήρ* used in conjunction with *τοῦ*

<sup>13</sup> Dodd (*op. cit.*, 352) has stated that the "dominant theme which gives unity to this whole episode (viz., Jn 7-8), narrative and dialogue alike, is that of the manifestation of the Logos as light and life". This statement does not seem to do justice to the facts.

<sup>14</sup> Ch. 1 = 2×; ch. 2 = 1×; ch. 3 = 1×; ch. 4 = 6×; ch. 5 = 14×; ch. 6 = 15×; ch. 8 = 20×. Jn 7 uses the word but once in the plural to indicate the Patriarchs.

<sup>15</sup> Jn 1,33 is not an exception since it is not Jesus who is speaking, but the Baptist.

πέμφαντός με (7,16) or τὸν πέμψαντά με (7,33),<sup>16</sup> one still notes the absence of the term, and one asks oneself why it is not found in 7,16-18 or, at least, in 7,28-29, where one would expect the Father to be mentioned.

The writer seems to be deliberately avoiding the term. This can easily be explained if he conceives chapters 7 and 8 as a dramatic unit and wishes to prepare for and work up to the more elaborate discussion on Jesus' origin and identity in chapter 8.

The following points mark the dramatic crescendo:

—Whereas Jesus in 7,17 merely affirms that his "doctrine" is "of God"—something susceptible to many interpretations and which therefore is quite general, although indicative—in 8,28 he says it is of the Father:

7,17 γνώσεται περὶ τῆς διδαχῆς πότερον ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστὶν ἢ ἀπ' ἐμαντοῦ λαλῶ

8,28 γνώσεσθε ὅτι ... καθὼς ἐδίδαξέν με ὁ πατήρ ταῦτα λαλῶ.

—Whereas at 7,17 Jesus only claims that his *doctrine* is ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, at 8,42 he says that *he* has come forth ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ.

—In 7,28 Jesus says he has not come of himself and that he who sent him is truthful. At 8,42 this sentence is repeated, but Jesus now says he has come *from God*, who the Jews claim is their Father.

—At 7,28 Jesus tells the Jews that they do not know the one who sent him, but that he knows him; at 8,54f he says that they do not know his Father, who they say is their God, but that he knows him.

—The word *θεός*, which is absent in chapter 7—being used only once in relation to the doctrine of Jesus (7,17)—appears eight times in chapter 8, thrice in the formula of origin ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ.

The development given to the question of Jesus' origin and identity in chapter 8, as compared with chapter 7, is noteworthy. In Jn 7 the question is developed in terms of his messiahship. We are still moving on the level of Jewish messianic ideas. The origin of Jesus is, consequently, treated in a manner which is rather veiled and allusive. With chapter 8 we move into new regions. Jesus presents himself as the Son of God; the question of his origin is now openly discussed.

The high point concerning the origin of Jesus in chapter 7 is reached in vv. 26-29, where Jesus says the Jews do not know where he is from because they do not know the one who sent him, from whom he comes. It is this cryptic allusion which is taken up in Jn 8,

<sup>16</sup> The genitive and accusative are usually found without the qualifying πατρός, πατέρα, but see Jn 5,23 (τὸν πατέρα τὸν πέμψαντα αὐτόν) and Jn 14,24 (τοῦ πέμψαντός με πατρός).

where the evangelist stresses the lack of understanding of the Jews and uses this device to bring out more clearly the divine Sonship of Jesus. At 8,18f Jesus mentions the Father who sent him and the Jews ask, "Where is your Father?"—they know neither him nor his Father. When he speaks of going back whence he came (to the Father—Jn 13,1.3), they think he is going to kill himself (vv. 21f). The allusion to the one who sent him (v. 26) is not understood by the Jews: "They did not understand that he spoke to them of the Father" (his Father!) (v. 27). Jn 8,38-47 explains that the prerogative of calling God "Father" is the exclusive prerogative of Jesus. At 8,42 Jesus declares that he did not come "of himself" (*ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ*), but *ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ*, since he was sent by the Father. The *ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθον καὶ ἤκω* goes beyond this. In a sense, every prophet may be said to come *ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ*, but no mere prophet can be said to be *ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ*. *Ἐκ* properly denotes origin or extraction and differs from *ἀπό*, which denotes departure or separation (it can also denote the "agent"—hence "mission"). By using *ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ*, Jesus is explaining that he has his origin and being in the Father: he is the Son of God, he alone can call God "Father" in the strict sense (*his Father*!).<sup>17</sup> Jn 8,54 summarizes the import of the whole section very clearly: the one whom the Jews call their God is the Father of Jesus.

B) *The use of the absolute ἐγώ εἰμι—Jesus,  
as Son of God, is equal to God*

The truth proclaimed at Jn 5,18 is restated in a more elaborate and explicit fashion in Jn 8. To the assertion of Jesus that God is his Father corresponds his use of the absolute *ἐγώ εἰμι* formula. Jesus declares that God is his Father—he thereby declares that he is equal to God. The two questions, "Where—(who)—is your Father?" (8,19.27) and "Who are you?" (8,25) correspond perfectly to each other. Jn 8 answers both questions. The answer to the first has been examined; the answer to the second is: *ἐγώ εἰμι*.

<sup>17</sup> Jn 8,47 does not contradict this view. Those who are *ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ* are those who believe on Jesus, and those who believe on Jesus are those who are given the power of becoming children of God, who are born *ἐκ θεοῦ*, cf. Jn 1,12f. We are dealing with the same class of individuals, considered from two complementary points of view (cf. J. Becker, *Das Heil Gottes. Heils- und Sündenbegriff in den Qumrantexten und im Neuen Testament* (Göttingen, 1964), 231). Such individuals may call God their Father, but only in virtue of their relationship to Jesus (Jn 20,17).

The use of the absolute  $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\iota\mu\iota$  formula is, with the exception of Jn 13,19, found only <sup>18</sup> in Jn 8, where it occurs relatively frequently (vv. 24.28.58). What Jn wishes to express when he has Jesus use this formula will depend on the origin of the formula. Various sources have been proposed.<sup>19</sup> The opinion which seems most plausible to the writer is that which would have the Johannine usage derive from the OT.<sup>20</sup>

The Johannine usage of the  $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\iota\mu\iota$  formula presents clear analogies with that of the OT. It is an action of Jesus which will reveal that *he is* (Jn 8,28), just as in the OT it is an action (viz., the action) of God in history which reveals that *He is*. In the OT God says, "As a result of ... (action) ... you will come to know that I am"; similarly Jesus tells the Jews that his "exaltation" will lead them to recognize that he is. The MT uses ידע, which is almost always rendered by γινώσκειν in the LXX; the same verb is used by Jn 8,28.<sup>21</sup> Just as the formula  $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\iota\mu\iota$  is used by God in the OT to reveal who he is, it is used by Jesus to reveal who he is. The reaction of the Jews is to be explained in the light of the Jewish (Rabbinical) use of the formula. Being the expression of the unicity of God, the divine name, it cannot be used except by him.

<sup>18</sup> Jn 6,20 and Jn 18,5f are not true examples of the absolute  $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\iota\mu\iota$ .

<sup>19</sup> For a rapid survey of the various sources proposed (Hellenism, Gnosticism, Mandaism, etc.) cf. H. Zimmermann, "Das absolute  $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\iota\mu\iota$  als die neutestamentliche Offenbarungsformel", *BZNf* 4 (1960) 54-69, 266-276; 55-56.

<sup>20</sup> This view is sustained by a great number of scholars. To the impressive list (Schlatter, Zickendraht, Büchsel, W. Bauer, Stauffer, Percy, Kundsinn, Richter, Wickenhauser, Dodd, Bartina) given by Zimmermann (*art. cit.*, 60f), we can add: Westcott, Bernard, Hoskyns, Barrett, Brown. The OT derivation has been given a sure foundation by E. Percy in *Untersuchungen über den Ursprung der johanneischen Theologie* (Lund, 1930) and by the excellent article of Zimmermann himself. Zimmermann holds that the absolute  $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\iota\mu\iota$  formula used by Jesus in Jn is to be traced back to the OT revelation formula אֲנִי יְהוָה through the LXX. In the MT אֲנִי יְהוָה is sometimes replaced by אֲנִי הוּא. The reason for this is apparently to be sought in the fact that the הוּא refers to the name of God (יהוה). The equivalence is of great importance. The LXX invariably renders אֲנִי הוּא by  $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\iota\mu\iota$  (Dt 32,39; Is 41,4; 43,10.13.25; 46,4; 48,12; 51,12; 52,6). In Is, where the absolute  $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\iota\mu\iota$  is found with the greatest frequency,  $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\iota\mu\iota$  is also found for אֲנִי יְהוָה (Is 45,18.19; comp. 43,10). It thus seems very likely that the use of the absolute  $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\iota\mu\iota$  as a revelation formula in the LXX is the bridge from the OT (MT) אֲנִי יְהוָה (אֲנִי הוּא) to the NT (Johannine) usage.

<sup>21</sup> Jn 8,28, especially when combined with Jn 13,19, presents striking similarities with Is 43,10 (LXX).

If one admits that Jn is reflecting the absolute *ἐγώ εἰμι* of the OT, it is unjustified to hold that he is simply using an enigmatic formula which veiledly implies that Jesus is all he claims to be in the Fourth Gospel<sup>22</sup> or to try to supply a predicate.<sup>23</sup> If a predicate were in order, it would be "the Son of God"; but the *ἐγώ εἰμι* gives emphasis to a particular *aspect* of Jesus' divine Sonship. In claiming "I am" Jesus is saying he is equal to God (in dependence upon him), that he is God.<sup>24</sup> Jesus is not placing himself beside God or against God, but claiming absolute unity with the Father. It is in virtue of this unity that Jesus can use the very formula which designates God's being. The *ἐγώ εἰμι* reveals the Father, it is his name<sup>25</sup>—but the Father's name is also that of the Son. The OT revelation of God finds its perfect expression in the Son who is *the* revelation of God.

<sup>22</sup> The interpretation is that of Bultmann (265): "ich bin alles das, von dem ich sagte, dass ich es bin". He is followed by W. Thüsing (*Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu im Johannesevangelium* (Münster, 1970), 18 and n. 23) who speaks of an "enigmatic formula". Bultmann refuses to see in the *ἐγώ εἰμι* a "Selbstidentifizierung Jesu mit Gott" (265; n. 7 and 248, n. 5); Strathmann (ad Jn 8,24) is of the same opinion.

<sup>23</sup> Various predicates have been supplied. "I am ... from above" (Bernard, ad 8,24—with some doubt; Loisy, ad 8,24); "I am ... the Messiah" (Lagrange, ad 8,24—with hesitation); "I am ... the Saviour" (Schanz, ad 8,24). Although Bultmann refuses to supply a predicate, he maintains that "all Jesus says he is" can be summarized in the statement: "I am ... the Son of Man".

<sup>24</sup> However, the temptation of supplying a predicate, be it even "the Son of God" (Toletus, ad 8,24) or "God" (Augustine, Thomas, Rupertus) should be resisted. The *ἐγώ εἰμι* indicates Jesus' claim to divinity precisely because it is used absolutely, without a predicate! Westcott, Barrett, Brown and others rightly take it as the "divine name" and refuse to supply any predicate.

<sup>25</sup> One of the most striking features about the LXX usage of *ἐγώ εἰμι* is that it appears to have been taken as the equivalent of a divine name. Is 43,25 *אֲנִי הוּא אֲנִי הוּא* is translated *ἐγώ εἰμι ἐγώ εἰμι* (I am "I AM"); Is 45,18 *אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֵין עֹדֵר* is translated *ἐγώ εἰμι καὶ οὐκ ἔστις ἕτερος*; Is 45,19 *אֲנִי יְהוָה דָּבָר* is translated *ἐγώ εἰμι ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος* (I am "I AM", the Lord). Comp. further Is 51,12; 52,6 and see Dodd, *Interpretation*, 93-96. *Ἐγώ εἰμι* ("I AM") becomes the proper name of God. Some Rabbis also took *אֲנִי הוּא* as the name of God, the *שם המפורש* which was to be revealed in the age to come. This went so far as to lead the Rabbis to consider the use of the *Ich-Stil* an abomination. The fearful reverence which forbade them to pronounce the divine name was extended to *אֲנִי* and *הוּא*: *הוּא* is treated as the divine name and *אֲנִי* should not be spoken by man. Cf. Zimmermann, *art. cit.*, 268f and the texts quoted by this author. There is evidence that *אֲנִי הוּא* (= *אֲנִי יְהוָה*) was treated as the *שם המפורש* in the Jewish liturgy of the Feast of the Tabernacles (Jn 8!) as far back as 70 A.D. See the statement of R. Judah (c. 150) quoted in Sukka 4,5 (*Str.-Bill.*, II, 797).

One must now believe that Jesus IS, just as Israel in the OT was asked to believe that God IS.<sup>26</sup>

The *ἐγώ εἰμι* in Jn 8,24.28.58 expresses to the fullest the perfect unity of Jesus with God already voiced in the affirmation that God is the Father of Jesus. It is not surprising that the *ἐγώ εἰμι* should be used in the immediate proximity of references to the Father (vv. 24-29) and that, at 8,28, the *γνώσεσθε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι* is immediately followed by : *καὶ ἂπ' ἐμᾶυτοῦ ποιῶ οὐδέν*. Significantly enough, Jesus tells the Jews, "When you have lifted up the Son of man, then you will know *ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι*." The crucifixion will reveal Jesus' absolute obedience to the Father, his total unity with him.<sup>27</sup> The "exaltation", as the beginning of the glorification, will disclose the true identity of Jesus : that the Father has given Jesus his "name" in order that Jesus reveal it.

The objection that, if *ἐγώ εἰμι* be taken in this sense, its pronouncement at Jn 8,24.28 should provoke immediate indignation <sup>28</sup> takes no account of the rules of dramatic composition. The scandal and indignation do come (8,59) and they show the full import of the formula. At Jn 8,24 the absolute *ἐγώ εἰμι* has no impact on the Jews; they take it as an incomplete affirmation and ask : *σὺ τίς εἶ ?* In reality the answer to the question is already given in the *ἐγώ εἰμι*, as the Jews will soon realize. The affirmation at Jn 8,28 again provokes no reaction. Both statements lead up to that of Jn 8,58 : *πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι ἐγώ εἰμι*. Most authors are in agreement that what is expressed here is that Jesus belongs to a different "order" of being. Like God, he has neither beginning nor end, he is eternal.<sup>29</sup> The opposition between *γενέσθαι* and *εἰμί*, which occurs only here in the NT and recalls the opposition between the pre-existing Logos who "was" (*ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ*) and John the Baptist (the world) who "became" (*ἐγένετο*), brings out what is already contained in the *ἐγώ εἰμι*. Already in the LXX the absolute *ἐγώ εἰμι* and the *ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὢν* of Ex 3,14 expressed the unique manner of "existing" proper

<sup>26</sup> These ideas have been expressed very well by Zimmermann, *art. cit.*, 270-271.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Thüsing, *op. cit.*, 15-22.

<sup>28</sup> Bultmann, 265, n. 7.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Barrett, ad 8,24; Bernard, ad 8,58; Dodd, *Interpretation*, 261; Hoskyns, 349; Bultmann, ad 8,58 (also 248, n. 4); Lagrange, ad 8,58; Loisy, 583; W. Bauer, ad 8,58; Lightfoot, 195. Especially worthy of notice is the use of *εἰμί*, rather than *ἦν*. The present marks not only the pre-existence of Jesus, but another modality of existence. See the following notes.

to God.<sup>30</sup> The "Zeitüberlegenheit" of God is also present in the Hebrew **הוא אני**, if the **הוא** is given the force of a copula.<sup>31</sup> Jesus is attributing to himself the unique mode of existence of God himself, expressed by the absolute *ἐγώ εἰμι* (**הוא אני**). He is usurping for himself the divine name, with all this implies.

The self-revelation of Jesus appears as a violation of the Law—blasphemy, and the Jews (who have finally understood) take up stones to lapidate him (v. 59).

### 3. Jn 10,24-38

If there should be any doubt left that at Jn 8,58f Jesus is being treated as a blasphemer, Jn 10,31ff would be more than sufficient to dispel it. The Jews again take up stones (*ἐβάστασαν πάλιν λίθους*) to stone Jesus. The *πάλιν* refers back to 8,59 (*ἤραν οὖν λίθους*), the only other instance in which the Jews sought to stone Jesus so far in the Gospel (reference will be made to the attempt of Jn 10,31 at 11,8). At 8,59 the charge was implied, at 10,33 it is openly declared: *λιθάζομέν σε ... περὶ βλασφημίας* (comp. v. 36: *λέγετε ὅτι βλασφημεῖς*). The "blasphemy" at 10,30 is contained in the words: *ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἐν ἐσμέν*, which at 10,33 are rendered by: *σὺ ἄνθρωπος ὧν ποιεῖς σεαυτὸν θεόν* (comp. *ἴσον ἑαυτὸν ποιῶν τῷ θεῷ*—5,18) and at 10,36 by: *υἱὸς (τοῦ) θεοῦ εἰμι* (comp. *πατέρα ἴδιον ἔλεγεν τὸν θεόν*—5,18).

Jn 10,24-38, where Jesus speaks of his relationship to the Father and of his person with a clarity hitherto avoided and where the charge of blasphemy is explicitly made for the first and only time, is thus a key text for understanding the role this issue plays in the dramatic development of the confrontation between Jesus and the Jews. The

<sup>30</sup> In the Greek the notion of "existence" is present in the absolute *ἐγώ εἰμι*. Because of the absence of the pronoun "he", there is a temporal connotation, besides one of "unicity". The LXX translation of Ex 3,14 (**אֲנִי אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה**, which probably means: "I am he who causes to be"): *ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ὢν* emphasizes the metaphysical notion of "existence", already present in the absolute *ἐγώ εἰμι*. On *ὁ ὢν* as "name" of God and expression of his "Zeitüberlegenheit", cf. F. Büchsel, *TWNT* II, art. *εἰμί*, 396-398.

<sup>31</sup> The meaning of the Hebrew **הוא אני** will depend on whether the **הוא** is given the force of a pronoun ("I (am) he") or of a copula (cf., in this sense, W. F. Albright, "Some Remarks on the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy XXXII", *VT* 9 (1959) 339-346, 342). In the latter case the meaning of the Hebrew would be the same as that of the Greek: it would have a "temporal" connotation.

text represents a turning point: we have definitely passed from the question of the Sabbath works to that of their significance. The Pharisees attempted to convict Jesus as a violator of the Sabbath (Law) only to be faced with the more basic question of his identity. Their attention and that of the evangelist now concentrate exclusively on the significance Jesus attributes to his *ἐργα*—his claim to be the Son of God. This is interpreted by the Pharisees as an even greater crime and renders Jesus, in their eyes, worthy of death as a violator of the Law ("according to our Law he must die because he has made himself (the) Son of God" 19,7).

We have mentioned that, in the Synoptics, Jesus is condemned to death on a charge of blasphemy. Jn, who gives such emphasis to the accusation of blasphemy made against Jesus (5,17f; 8,58f; 10,31ff; 19,7) seems to ignore the role the charge of blasphemy played during the trial and that it was the imputation which led to Jesus' condemnation and death. The trial before Caiaphas is omitted by Jn. In the hearing before Annas no such charge is raised. It is only in the trial before the Roman Governor that Jesus is accused of having made himself "Son of God" (blasphemy)<sup>32</sup> and of being therefore deserving of death. But here there is no question of a verdict being pronounced. It is a "fait accompli"—Jesus has already been judged by the "Jews" according to their Law and *must die*. It is only the ratification and execution of the verdict which is being requested from Pilate.<sup>33</sup>

A) *Jn 10,24-38 and the trial of Jesus before the  
Sanhedrin (Caiaphas)*

In order to appreciate the implications of Jn 10,24-38 it will be necessary to consider the relationship between the material found here and that found in the Synoptic account of the trial before the Sanhedrin (Caiaphas).

1) Is the material found at Jn 10,24-38 the same as that found in the Synoptic accounts of the trial before the Sanhedrin (Caiaphas)?

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<sup>32</sup> According to the Jews, Jesus, by making himself "Son of God", not only blasphemes but renders himself guilty of *πλάγη* (Jn 7,45ff) and of endangering the very existence of Judaism (Jn 11,47ff).

<sup>33</sup> See Chapter Ten, pp. 307; 323-325.



It is the merit of Dodd<sup>34</sup> to have pointed out that the question and answer concerning the messiahship of Jesus and the verdict of guilty on a charge of blasphemy which we find in the trial scene before the Sanhedrin (Mk 14,61-64, Par) "is to be found imbedded in the dialogue of Jn 10,22-38".<sup>35</sup> The key phrases: *σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστός* (10,24), *υἱὸς (τοῦ) θεοῦ* (v. 36), and *βλασφημία, βλασφημεῖς* (vv. 33-36) are also found in the Markan account of the trial before Caiaphas. The nucleus of the Encaenia dialogue therefore "appears to be an alternative formulation of the material which we possess also in the Markan pericope".<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, the opening of the dialogue in Jn shows striking analogies with the opening of the proceedings before the Sanhedrin found in Lk (who differs from Mk). We have only to compare Jn 10,24-25 with Lk 22,67-68 to come away with the conviction that we are dealing with the same material. Rather than suppose that Jn conflated Lk and Mk, it is more indicated to assume that Jn received the *same material* found in Lk and Mk *from an independent tradition*.<sup>37</sup>

2) Was the material Jn derived from an independent tradition connected with the Passion narrative (viz., with the trial before Caiaphas)?

Dodd does not exclude this, but he also allows for another possibility: that the material was connected with the "trial" neither in the tradition Jn used nor in that used by the Synoptics—the Synoptics (Mk and Lk) used it in the account of the examination before the High Priest, Jn found another setting for it. We believe there are good reasons to hold that the first possibility has a much higher degree of probability.

i) Mk and Lk connect the dialogue reported in Mk 14,61, Par, with the trial before the High Priest. It is likely that this reflects a primitive tradition.<sup>38</sup> Since what is embedded in the Encaenia dialogue is basically the same material found at Mk 14,61, Par, one must at least allow for the possibility that, in the tradition which

<sup>34</sup> Cf. *Hist. Trad.*, 88-96.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>38</sup> For another view, cf. R. E. Brown, "Incidents that Are Units in the Synoptic Gospels but Dispersed in St. John", *CBQ* 23 (1961) 143-160, 148-152. The Synoptic account, for this author, represents a collection of charges made on different occasions. Jn, who spreads the accusations over a wider period of time, would be closer to historical fact.

came down to the Synoptic writers and in that which came down to Jn, the material may have been part of the trial scene before the High Priest. This argument is far from decisive because one must admit that (1) the setting may not correspond to historical tradition (i.e., Mk and Lk or the traditions they were using may have created an artificial setting for the dialogue); (2) even if the setting found in the Synoptics had firm roots in historical tradition, Jn is using an independent tradition and this tradition may have reported the dialogue in a different setting.

ii) Jn apparently has voluntarily omitted the trial before Caiaphas. One cannot take this for granted. Some exegetes hold that the hearing related at Jn 18,12-24 takes place before Caiaphas and not before Annas.<sup>39</sup> If one holds that the hearing takes place before Annas, a number of difficulties arise. The greatest is that Jn has explicitly said that Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas and that Caiaphas was the ἀρχιερεύς (18,13; comp. 11,51). Now vv. 13.22 speak of the ἀρχιερεύς and, if the hearing is taking place before Annas, we would have a contradiction: Annas would be the High Priest, not Caiaphas. The second difficulty is that, if the hearing takes place before Annas, the denial of Peter would also take place in Annas' courtyard, which is contrary to what the Synoptics say.

The only solution to these difficulties which would seem to commend itself would be to modify the order of the pericope. This was already undertaken by some ancient manuscripts<sup>40</sup> and, recently, by Lagrange and Schneider. These two authors propose to have v. 24 follow upon v. 13. It must be admitted that this transposition (if vv. 15.16 are not separated) solves all the difficulties, *except one*. If the hearing takes place before Caiaphas why should Jn mention that Jesus is brought to Annas at all<sup>41</sup> (Annas sends him immediately

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<sup>39</sup> The ancient MSS (syr[sin] syr[pal][ms], 225, Cyr Alex), which transpose v. 24 after v. 13, implicitly advocate this view, as do Loisy, Lagrange and, more recently, J. Schneider ("Zur Komposition von Joh 18,12-27", *ZNW* 48 (1957) 111-119). Most exegetes (Bultmann—who proposes a theory of his own, refuted by Schneider; Barrett, Lightfoot, Bernard, Hoskyns, W. Bauer, Blinzler, Dodd) hold that the trial before Caiaphas has been omitted.

<sup>40</sup> See the preceding note. Especially interesting is the variant reading found in  $\aleph$ , 13, 69, 124, etc., sah, syr[sin], pesh, at v. 24. These MSS read  $\delta\epsilon$  instead of  $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ . The  $\delta\epsilon$  fits the hypothesis that v. 24 followed immediately upon v. 13. See Lagrange, 459f.

<sup>41</sup> The difficulty was already seen by Loisy (ad loc.), who gives a very poor explanation: "il est moins extraordinaire que Jesus soit venu pour rien chez Hanan que chez Caiphe". The visit to Annas is a historical detail retained by the evangelist.

to Caiaphas!)? Schneider makes the interesting observation <sup>42</sup> that, in Lk, Jesus is taken first to the house of the High Priest and then, the next morning, to the Council, where the official hearing takes place (before Caiaphas). Since Lk calls both Annas and Caiaphas ἀρχιερεύς (Lk 3,2; Act 4,5), it is possible that the house of the High Priest designates the house of Annas. John and Luke would be in agreement: Jesus was brought first to Annas, then to Caiaphas. Schneider believes this is highly unlikely.<sup>43</sup> At any rate, even if one does not admit that the "house of the High Priest" means the house of Annas, it is evident that both Lk and Jn speak of a change of place: Jesus is brought first to the house of the High Priest (Lk = Annas (?); Jn = Annas) and then (Lk = the next morning) to Caiaphas (Lk = to the Council, presided by Caiaphas). Rather than suppose that Jn is retaining a historical detail and mentions that Jesus was brought to Annas only to add, in the same breath, that he was sent immediately to Caiaphas, we believe the observation can be used much more profitably: Jesus was sent to Annas—and Jn relates a hearing which presumably takes place before him—then he was sent to Caiaphas, where the official hearing took place. The latter hearing is omitted by Jn.

But what of the difficulty mentioned above? How can Jn refer to Annas as the High Priest? The difficulty is partly removed when one recalls that the term ἀρχιερεύς is used loosely to designate not only the High Priest who is in office, but anyone who belongs to the group of ex-High Priests or to the families from which they were chosen.<sup>44</sup> Josephus uses the term with exactly the same ambiguity found in Jn 18,12ff, and Jn himself gives us an example of ambiguity in the use of the term at 11,47-49, where he refers to the High Priests and then says that Caiaphas was (the) High Priest that year! Annas can therefore be called ἀρχιερεύς, even though Caiaphas was the ἀρχιερεύς in office at the time.

Independently from this aspect of the matter, it seems that one must resist the temptation of rearranging the text, for the difficulty

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We shall see that the omission of the official trial before Caiaphas has a purpose, a purpose which the omission of the hearing before Annas can, avowedly, not have.

<sup>42</sup> *Art. cit.*, 115f. The observation had already been made by Lagrange (460).

<sup>43</sup> Schneider (*art. cit.*, 116) considers it "höchst unwahrscheinlich" that the "house of the High Priest" in Lk should designate the house of Annas.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Dodd, *Hist. Trad.*, 93-94; esp. 94, nn. 1 and 2.

speaks in favour of the present order rather than against it. The confusion which is evident in the text <sup>45</sup> is a good indication that the evangelist is compiling traditional material,<sup>46</sup> rather than composing freely. In the tradition he is using, Annas is also designated as "High Priest". The evangelist retains the title and tries to clarify that Caiaphas, not Annas, was in office at the time (18,13).

The second difficulty remains: Mk and Mt present the denial of Peter as taking place in the courtyard of Caiaphas, Jn (and Lk?) as taking place in the courtyard of Annas. But a similar discrepancy is also found between Lk and Mk (Mt). According to Lk, Jesus is first brought to the house of the High Priest; it is here that Peter denies him. Then he is led to the Council, where—according to Mk and Mt—Peter denies him! Jn and Lk are therefore in agreement on another point: the denial of Peter did not take place during the official hearing (they are probably in agreement in giving it the setting found in Jn: it was in the courtyard of Annas).<sup>47</sup> We believe that the incongruence should simply be accepted: Jn (and Lk) disagree with Mk and Mt. It should not lead us to hold that the hearing Jn reports takes place before Caiaphas.

A last difficulty is more apparent than real: it is not necessary to suppose that the denial of Peter takes place first in the courtyard of Annas (18,15-18) and then in that of Caiaphas (18,25-27). We are always in the courtyard of Annas, notwithstanding v. 24.<sup>48</sup>

The omission of the trial before Caiaphas, if the rearrangement proposed by Lagrange is rejected, is highlighted by the structure of Jn 18,24-28. Although the hearing is omitted, the "Rahmen" is

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<sup>45</sup> The present order is not very smooth. The *ἦν δὲ καὶ ὁ Πέτρος ... ἐστὼς καὶ θερμαινόμενος* of v. 18 is repeated in v. 25, with a slight variation; the denial, split as it is, seems to do violence to the unity of setting; the two *ἀρχιερεῖς* are bound to be confused. Rightly Loisy (831).

<sup>46</sup> Dodd, *op. cit.*, 93-95. We disagree with this author only when it comes to the dialogue itself—we hold that Jn is composing freely, with a specific theological purpose.

<sup>47</sup> This has led some to affirm that Annas and Caiaphas lived in the same house! So J. Knabenbauer (*Evangelium secundum Ioannem* (Paris, 21906), ad loc.), Schanz and others.

<sup>48</sup> Rightly Hoskyns (514) and most commentators vs. Loisy (830) and Schneider (*art. cit.*, 113), who writes: "Es muss aber als ausgeschlossen gelten, dass die erste Verleugnung des Petrus—wie man doch aus der jetzigen Textfolge *schliessen muss*—im Hof des Hannas, die zweite und dritte Verleugnung dagegen im Hof des Kaiaphas stattgefunden haben" (I underline).

retained. Jn mentions that Annas sent Jesus to Caiaphas (v. 24) and then that Jesus is led from Caiaphas to Pilate (v. 28). The gap between vv. 24 and 28 is filled by the second and third denials of Peter. We have said that the division of the denial (vv. 15-18; 25-27) does not imply a change of setting. Yet the division is awkward. If one holds that Jn deliberately omitted the trial scene (as vv. 24, 28 indicate) the introduction of vv. 25-27 may be explained as a rather ingenious means of filling the gap.<sup>49</sup>

iii) It would be in perfect keeping with Johannine "technique" to have given the hearing before Caiaphas a new setting. The studies of Dodd have shown beyond question that one of the Johannine characteristics is to give new "settings" to material traditionally found in other contexts.<sup>50</sup> But in order to invoke this principle one must be able to show that Jn had good reasons for transposing the material contained in the trial before Caiaphas into the period of Jesus' public ministry. If any such reason can be adduced it will afford the strongest argument of all in favour of considering Jn 10, 22-38 the Johannine version of the trial before Caiaphas.

iv) Is there any reason why Jn should have transferred the dialogue from the trial to the period which closes Jesus' public ministry? Dodd says no. "Our evangelist had no theological motive for excluding from his Passion narrative material so closely germane to his own thought".<sup>51</sup> Bultmann and Goguel would challenge this statement.<sup>52</sup> The dialogue recorded in the Synoptic "trial scene" has a strong eschatological and messianic colouring and this, according to many exegetes,<sup>53</sup> would be the reason why Jn omitted it (viz., transposed it). The reasoning is valid, but only to a certain point. Could Jn not have modified the traditional material to suit his purpose (i.e., by omitting the "messianic-eschatological" element and emphasizing the claim of being Son of God)? This would have been no "tour de force": the

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<sup>49</sup> We are not suggesting that Jn used this device in order to *camouflage* the omission (cf. Loisy (829) who criticizes this view, proposed by Brandt). The omission was deliberate and was meant to be noticed.

<sup>50</sup> One has only to think of the eucharistic words, omitted from the Last Supper and incorporated into the account of the multiplication of the loaves. Dodd (*Hist. Trad., passim*) gives many such examples.

<sup>51</sup> *Op. cit.*, 92.

<sup>52</sup> Bultmann (498), who quotes Goguel (*Vie de Jésus*, 491).

<sup>53</sup> Besides Bultmann (who also adduces another motive: that Jesus has said all he has to say) and Goguel, cf. Blinzler (*op. cit.*, 136) and Barrett (437), among others.

expression *υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ* is found in the Synoptic accounts of the "trial" (Mt and Lk) and Lk's version of the hearing already moves decidedly in the direction of Jn.<sup>54</sup> At Jn 10,22ff (if it contains the same material found in Mk 14,61ff, Par) the eschatological-messianic element has been left aside and stress has been given to the title "Son of God". This could have been done equally well in chapter 18! We must therefore ask if there is some other reason which may have induced Jn to omit the trial scene before Caiaphas and transpose it into the period of the public ministry, while modifying it. The reason may be theological or/and dramatic.

The reason for the Johannine omission is manifested by the meaning and purpose Jn gives to the hearing before Annas. The pericope will be analyzed in the following chapter, but we may already anticipate the conclusions we have reached. The whole point of the hearing is to show that the charge against Jesus is his self-revelation during his public ministry, in virtue of which he already stands condemned in the eyes of the Jews. Jn brings this out by having Jesus refer to the public nature of his "teaching" (self-revelation) and refuse to add anything new or even repeat what he has already said. In the Synoptics the hearing before the Council reaches its climax with the question and answer concerning the messiahship of Jesus. It is because of his open claim of being the Messiah, which adds something new to what Jesus had said during his public ministry,<sup>55</sup> that Jesus is condemned and sentenced to death (Lk glosses over the condemnation). If we assume that the account of the trial which Jn received from tradition was substantially the same as that reported in the Synoptics, the reason for the Johannine omission and transposition is obvious. In the Johannine view, the "trial" of Jesus by the Jews (of the Jews by Jesus) comes to an end with the public ministry.<sup>56</sup> The "condem-

<sup>54</sup> Cf. P. Winter, "Luke XXII 66b-71", *StudTheol* 9 (1955) 112-115.

<sup>55</sup> In Mk, for instance, where the "messianic secret" is a central theme, the public proclamation of his messiahship made by Jesus is something unprecedented and comes as a true climax.

<sup>56</sup> The *trial itself has taken place*. "Johannes weiss, dass gegen Jesus vor dem ... amtierenden Hohenpriester Kaiaphas—und dem Synedrium—verhandelt und dass dort das Urteil über ihn gefällt worden ist" (Strathmann, 229). It is simply wrong to repeat, with most commentators, that it is the trial before Pilate which is of interest to Jn and that "der 4. Evangelist interessiert sich für das jüdische Gericht so gut wie gar nicht" (W. Bauer, 208). It is the "trial" of Jesus by the Jews which is central to the Fourth Gospel.

nation" of Jesus runs parallel to his public ministry. There is no "official" trial of Jesus by the Jews. The "trial" before the Roman procurator serves to show the inconsequence and injustice of the "judgement" and "verdict" already reached by the Jews.<sup>57</sup> Had Jn wished to retain the trial before Caiaphas and still maintain this perspective, he would have had to recast it completely. But even Jn could not allow himself the liberty of recasting an episode so deeply rooted in tradition into a form similar to that which he gave the hearing before Annas. In our view, this is the reason for the omission. There are no other reasons which made the trial before Caiaphas unsuitable to be incorporated by Jn into the Passion narrative.

### *Conclusion*

Given the identity of the material recorded in Jn 10,22ff and Mk 14,61ff, Par; given that the Synoptics are unanimous in connecting this material with the trial before Caiaphas and given that Jn has obviously omitted the trial before Caiaphas—as is indicated both by the *Rahmen* (vv. 24,28) and by the fact that one can readily explain *why* Jn should have omitted this material in chapter 18—we hold that Jn has transposed the account he received of the trial before Caiaphas into the period of Jesus' public ministry.

The implications for Jn 10,22-38 are of great consequence. The dialogue recorded here represents the last great confrontation between Jesus and the Jews and is meant to give us an insight into the reason which led to Jesus' condemnation and death.

### *B) Jn 10,24-38—The Law demands the condemnation of Jesus as a blasphemer because he makes himself equal to God*

Jn 10,22ff is of interest to us only from the point of view of the attempt of the Jews to convict and execute Jesus on the charge of blasphemy. We will therefore consider :

- a) The question of the Jews and the answer of Jesus;
- b) The evidence adduced by Jesus in support of his claim;
- c) The reason why the Jews do not accept the claim nor the evidence and treat Jesus as a blasphemer.

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<sup>57</sup> See pp. 310-326.

a) *The question of the Jews and the answer of Jesus**The question*

The words of Jn 10,24 are closely parallel to those which open the trial before Caiaphas in Lk 22,67-68 : *εἰ σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστός, εἰπὸν ἡμῖν*. They are to be found, in a different form, both in Mk and Mt.

In Mk 14,61 the question comes as a climax to Jesus' whole ministry. He has repeatedly enjoined silence concerning his identity as the Messiah. The public avowal before the Council was something new and led to his condemnation and death as a blasphemer. In Jn the question gives the impression of an anti-climax. It apparently serves only to underline the blindness of the Jews—it seems totally unnecessary<sup>58</sup> to question Jesus about his messiahship after what he has affirmed about himself and what has been affirmed about him. Yet, although we cannot speak of a "messianic secret" in Jn, it is a fact that Jesus never publicly affirms to be the Messiah. He does so in private (4,26 : 9,35.37), but his messiahship is still the object of lively debate in Jn 7,26-42. An open, public affirmation of his messiahship would therefore be a novelty. The demand made by the Jews is a novelty.<sup>59</sup> It has no precedent in the Fourth Gospel and, in its directness and urgency, recalls that of Mk 14,61 (although the formulation is closer to Lk 22,67). The *εἰπέ ἡμῖν παρρησίᾳ* reminds one of the *παρρησίᾳ λελάληκα τῷ κοσμῷ* (Jn 18,20) and gives a touch of irony to the whole situation. Yet irony plays a subordinate role. It is ironical that the Jews should ask Jesus to do what he has already done, but the question will allow Jesus to reaffirm what he has already said much more clearly than he has ever done in the past.

*The answer*

It is erroneous to affirm that vv. 22-38 deal with two questions which receive two answers of approximately the same length and to entitle vv. 22-31 "Jesus as the Messiah" and vv. 34-38 "Jesus as

<sup>58</sup> Such a question is senseless after all Jesus has said ! Goguel concludes ("La vie et la pensée de Jésus dans le christianisme primitif", *RHPR* 5 (1925) 509-539, 519) that v. 24 is but a relic of a source.

<sup>59</sup> On the novelty of both question and answer cf. J. Giblet, "Et il y eut la Dédicace ... Jean 10,22-39", *BiViChr* 66 (1965) 17-25, 19f. Giblet relies on Dodd (*Interpretation*, 361), whom he does not quote.



the Son of God".<sup>60</sup> There is only *one* question ("Are you the Messiah?") and the *one* answer does not correspond perfectly to the one question. The Jews question Jesus in terms of the messiahship. Jesus answers, "I told you and you do not believe". The answer is not direct; Jesus does not openly declare, "I am the Messiah". No doubt, the claim to messiahship is implied, but the ambiguity does not respect the *ἐπὶ ἡμῶν παρησίᾳ*. It is only as the discourse moves on that a public and open statement will be made. It will contain more than the avowal requested by the Jews.<sup>61</sup> Jesus will declare openly and publicly that he is the Son of God. In the light of the ensuing discourse, it is the claim of being Son of God which is already foreshadowed in v. 25. The centre of interest has moved from the messiahship of Jesus (question) to his divine Sonship (answer). The two titles are not to be separated, but they should be distinguished. Nowhere in Jewish sources was the Messiah considered a being of divine origin. Jn shows great interest both for the title "Messiah"<sup>62</sup> and for that of "Son of God", but he clearly subordinates the former to the latter in the present discourse, (and in the Gospel as a whole).<sup>63</sup> It is as "Son of God"<sup>64</sup> (one with the Father) that Jesus is able to carry out and bring to perfection the *ἔργον* the Father has entrusted to him to accomplish; *it is as Son of God* (one with the Father) *that Jesus is the Messiah*, forming the new flock and giving his sheep eternal life (10,28).

The answer of Jesus to the Jews receives three equivalent formulations: *ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἐν ἐσμέν* (10,30); *ἐν ἐμοὶ ὁ πατήρ*

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Brown, 405ff.

<sup>61</sup> "Son discours contient plus que l'aveu demandé ... je suis le Fils envoyé du Père". Loisy, 622.

<sup>62</sup> The central role the question of Jesus' messiahship plays in the Fourth Gospel has been stressed recently by W. C. van Unnik ("The Purpose of St. John's Gospel", *StudEv* I, (Berlin, 1959), 382-411.

<sup>63</sup> "All through this gospel the evangelist, while aiming at convincing his readers that 'Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God' (20,31) develops his doctrine of the person of Christ in categories which are substantially independent of the Jewish messianic idea". (Dodd, *Interpretation*, 361). One can therefore understand why the "Son of God" title has received (as van Unnik laments) much more attention from Johannine scholars than the title "Messiah".

<sup>64</sup> The article is lacking both at Jn 10,36 and Jn 19,7 (*υἱὸς θεοῦ*). Westcott (ad 10,36) suggests that "the absence of the article fixes the attention on the character rather than the person".

καὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ (10,38); υἱὸς (τοῦ) θεοῦ εἰμι (10,36). What is being affirmed here is what had already been affirmed at 5,17f, but the formulas represent something new and anticipate the deeper teaching of the Farewell Discourses. D'Aragon<sup>65</sup> has rightly remarked that the idea of unity in Jn is expressed precisely through the neuter singular *ἐν* and through the immanence formulas *εἶναι ἐν*, *μένειν ἐν* or simply *ἐν*. What Jesus is emphasizing is his total unity with God (which implies some sort of identity) as constituting his Sonship.<sup>66</sup> In the Synoptics the trial of Jesus reaches its climax with his affirmation that he is the Messiah; in Jn the κρίσις (judgement, condemnation) of Jesus by the Jews reaches its climax with Jesus' affirmation: υἱὸς (τοῦ) θεοῦ εἰμι. It is the first time and the only time in the Fourth Gospel that Jesus will explicitly declare: υἱὸς (τοῦ) θεοῦ εἰμι. We cannot say that this comes as a revelation to the reader. Jesus has already been called (ὁ) υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ and has often enough referred to his divine filiation, but never, not even in private, has Jesus ever declared, "I am the Son of God".<sup>67</sup> It is this statement of Jesus which, for the first time, explicitly receives the epithet "blasphemy".

b) *The evidence adduced by Jesus in support of his claim*

At the outset (v. 24) in the midst (v. 32) and at the end (vv. 37,38) of his discourse, Jesus refers to his *ἔργα* as substantiating evidence of the truth he proclaims concerning his person. The thought of Jesus' *ἔργα* bearing witness to him is already found at Jn 5,36, and the man born blind has insisted on the σημεῖα of Jesus as legitimation of his divine mission. The thought is not new—it is a *Leitmotiv* of the Fourth Gospel, but never has Jesus (Jn) made such insistent apologetic use of his *ἔργα*. We reserve a full treatment of the role the *ἔργα*, σημεῖα play in the "judgement" of Jesus by the Jews (viz.,

<sup>65</sup> J.-L. d'Aragon, "La notion johannique de l'unité", *ScE* 11 (1959) 111-119.

<sup>66</sup> D'Aragon mentions Jn 10,38 in conjunction with 14,20; 17,23; 14,10f; 17,21 as indicating the community of life Father-Son and adds: "une telle communion suppose une certaine unité" (*art. cit.*, 114).

<sup>67</sup> Jesus is called υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ by others (Jn 1,34,49; 11,27): prior to 10,36 Jesus also refers to himself "in oblique" (i.e., speaking in the third person) as υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ (Jn 3,18; 5,25). He does so once more at 11,4. Never does Jesus declare, "I am the Son of God"—in the first person—as he does at 10,36. Jn 19,7 thus calls to mind Jn 10,36 more than any other text.

of the Jews by Jesus) for later.<sup>68</sup> There are a few points in our pericope, however, which should retain our immediate attention.

When the Jews pick up stones to lapidate Jesus, he asks, "I showed you *πολλὰ ἔργα καλά*, for which of these do you stone me?" The reply is remarkable. The Jews no longer object that Jesus violates the Law by working on the Sabbath (cf. 5,16.18; 9,16). On the contrary, they recognize his works as *καλά*. It is the statement of Jesus which is scandalous: he is a man, yet makes himself equal to God. The Jews are again considering the *ἔργα* and the significance Jesus gives them as two distinct issues (Jn 9!).

After having had recourse to the OT<sup>69</sup> Jesus returns to the *ἔργα*. Vv. 37-38 represent (with 14,11) the strongest appeal to the *ἔργα* to be found in Jn. The Jews are invited to proceed from what they have observed, from facts they cannot deny.<sup>70</sup> The formula *τοῖς ἔργοις πιστεύειν* is singular. It is the only instance in which *πιστεύειν* has *ἔργα* as object. The very *ἔργα* are, in a sense, object of belief. The works of Jesus may be *καλά* for the Jews (paradoxically enough, for *ἔργα καλά* must have their origin in God—they are not merely *Liebeswerke* but "works of God"),<sup>71</sup> they have no true significance for them. To accept them as *ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ* (viz., to believe the works) would mean to discover Jesus' identity with the Father.

On the basis of the argument from Scripture and, more fundamentally, on the basis of his "works", Jesus has justified the attribution he has made to himself of the title "Son of God". It is a justification not only of v. 30 (vv. 36.38), but of all the previous declarations of Christ which are epitomized in this section. The Jews are not won over. They have sought to stone Jesus, now they seek to arrest him.

<sup>68</sup> See the section on Jn 7,51, pp. 151-155.

<sup>69</sup> Jn 10,35 will be dealt with in Chapter Seven, pp. 175ff.

<sup>70</sup> Arguing against Bultmann, van Unnik says of the Johannine "signs": "To be sure, they require faith, but for Jn it was important that they were done and it was impossible to deny that they had been done. They are proofs which can be accepted in a purely earthly manner (6,27) or rejected altogether or accepted for what they were: the works of God". *Art. cit.*, 402. It is impossible here to give *ἔργα* the sense of *ρήματα* (Bultmann, 297). Jesus tells the Jews, "If you do not believe me (what I say, my words), believe my works".

<sup>71</sup> W. Grundmann (*TWNT* III, art. *καλός*, 550, 32ff) distinguishes between "Liebeswerke" (Mt 5,16, etc.) and the *ἔργα καλά* of Jn 10,32. Rengstorf (*TWNT* VII, art. *σημεῖον*, 247, 26ff and n. 328) agrees with Grundmann: the works of Jesus are *καλά* because they are the works of the Father.

c) *The reason why the Jews do not accept the claim of Jesus nor the evidence of his work, but treat him as a blasphemer*

Correlative to the insistence on the evidence of the "works" is the insistence on faith as the means of perceiving the existence and validity of this evidence (see above). The Jews do not believe (οὐ πιστεύετε ... οὐ πιστεύετε vv. 25.26). Πιστεύειν is used absolutely, but most probably the verb in v. 25 is to be brought in relation with εἶπον ὑμῖν and with τὰ ἔργα ... μαρτυρεῖ (v. 26). Unbelief is seen as the reason why the Jews accept neither Jesus' self-revelation in word, nor his self-revelation in work. Hence the appeal of vv. 37f which again speaks of faith as the prerequisite for accepting Jesus' unity with the Father. The ἔργα themselves must be "believed" if they are to have any real significance. Clearly, what the Jews lack is faith. It is this deficiency which leads them not to believe Jesus, not to discover his unity with the Father and hence to treat him as a blasphemer. We shall see that it is for this reason that they violate the Law by condemning Jesus.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE CHARGE OF FALSE TEACHING. IS THE TEACHING OF JESUS OPPOSED TO THE LAW ?

In order to appreciate the Johannine presentation of Jesus' teaching and its relationship to the Law, it will be profitable to cast a brief look at the relationship of teaching (למד—διδάσκειν) to the Torah in the Jewish tradition.<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. TEACHING AND THE LAW IN THE JEWISH TRADITION

The intellectualistic, theoretical conception of teaching and education of the Greeks is foreign to Hebrew thought. "To teach" means to bring about the total adherence of the pupil to that which is taught.

In the OT, למד—διδάσκειν is found used in a profane sense; the religious sense, however, predominates neatly over the profane. In this sense, למד (διδάσκειν) means to mould the will of the disciple into conformity with the divine will;<sup>2</sup> its goal is to lead the disciple to know and to do the will of God, as manifested and synthesized in the Law.

In Judaism there can be no "teaching", just as there can be no "school" (Bet Sefer, Bet Midrash), without the Torah.<sup>3</sup> The teaching office, which before Ezra belonged to the priestly caste and later became also the task of the Scribes,<sup>4</sup> was centred around the Law. "Teaching" was essentially the imparting of what was considered to be an unchangeable body of tradition (written and oral) which was revealed (taught) directly by God. The role of the teacher was therefore that of revealing what he himself had received.<sup>5</sup> Everything he taught was contained explicitly or implicitly in the twofold Law revealed (taught) by God to Israel through Moses and the prophets. In the more recent parts of the OT and in the Rabbinic writings למד—διδάσκειν, used absolutely, has the fixed meaning: "the way in which one assists the individual in ordering his relationship to God himself and to his neighbour according to the divine will by explaining the Law as the

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<sup>1</sup> For an exhaustive treatment of the Jewish background the reader is referred to the articles: διδάσκω, διδάσκαλος, διδαχή, μαθητής and ῥαββί in the *TWNT*, as well as to Moore, *Judaism*, I, 308ff.

<sup>2</sup> Rengstorff, *TWNT* II, art. διδάσκω, 146, 31ff.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Moore, *Judaism*, I, 41-43; 308ff.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Eichrodt, *Theol.*, I, 266; 269f.

<sup>5</sup> J. L. McKenzie (*Dictionary of the Bible* (London, 1968), art. "Teaching") has stressed the "revelatory" function of the teacher in Israel. We may add that the connection of teaching and revelation is especially visible in Qumran.

synthesis of the revealed will of God.”<sup>6</sup> The connection of “teaching” with the Law is mirrored by the terms תלמוד and תורה (which probably derives from ירה; Hifil = הורה, to teach),<sup>7</sup> although a designation for the whole of revelation of which the מצות and חקים are but an integral part,<sup>8</sup> becomes more and more identified with the “legal” content of this revelation.<sup>9</sup> תלמוד (from למד—to teach) simply comes to mean “Gesetzeslehre”.<sup>10</sup>

Especially important is the view of “teaching” found in *Qumran*.<sup>11</sup> The Torah is a “vorgegebene Grösse”. It is not revealed but needs to be “revealed” in order to be understood because its meaning is “hidden”. The mediators of this revelation are many (Zadok, the prophets, Ezra), but a new epoch begins with the activity of the “Teacher of righteousness”. Since the “hidden things” contained in the Torah are “discovered” through the “searching” of the Torah, the “Teacher of righteousness” is the *Toraforcher* “par excellence”. The “priests” who belong to the Sect share in this activity. “Revelation” and “searching of the Torah” belong together and the “truth” which is thus discovered (revealed) is communicated by the Teacher and by the priests through their teaching. It is a small group which receives this special teaching; the rest of Israel goes astray. Teaching in Qumran is at the service of the Law.

In the *Synoptics* Jesus appears as a “teacher” in the accepted Rabbinical sense and the form of his teaching is in conformity with normal Rabbinical procedure. Even the content of his teaching is similar to that of the Rabbis. Although he introduced innovations and even dared to go against the Law in some instances, Jesus does not seem to have wilfully set himself in opposition to the Law.<sup>12</sup> What marked off his “teaching” from that of the Rabbis of his day and of previous generations or from that of the “Teacher of righteousness” is that it was not limited to a casuistic explanation of the Law. The “juridical” receives little emphasis in the teaching of Jesus.<sup>13</sup> More basically still: his teaching is not in subservience to the Law. He refuses to make of the Law an absolute entity. On the contrary, while recognizing that the will of God is revealed in the Torah (in the Scriptures and in the Pentateuch in particular), his attitude towards the Law

<sup>6</sup> Rengstorf, *TWNT* II, 140, 24ff.

<sup>7</sup> The etymology of תורה is uncertain. If it derives from ירה (to cast) it refers to the divine oracles obtained by casting lots and given by the priests; hence, priestly instruction. The Hifil of ירה has the meanings: to throw, shoot, point out, show, direct, teach, instruct.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Moore, *Judaism*, III, n. 28; I, 263ff.

<sup>9</sup> See what is said concerning this on pp. 381; 432-435.

<sup>10</sup> Rengstorf, *TWNT*, II, 141, 4.

<sup>11</sup> On the following, cf. O. Betz, *Offenbarung und Schriftforschung in der Qumran-sekte*, Wiss. Untersuchungen zum NT, 6 (Tübingen, 1960), 6-73; esp.: 7f; 12-14; 23-25; 55-69.

<sup>12</sup> H. Braun (*Radikalismus*, II, 16f) does not see an opposition between Jesus and the Torah in the most primitive layers of the Synoptic tradition. This author holds that Jesus did not wish to set his teaching against that of the Torah, even though he did occasionally go against its teaching (*ibid.*, II, 12f and nn. 1, 2).

<sup>13</sup> Braun, *ibid.*, II, 23ff.

expressed the conviction that the Law is subservient (not opposed!) to him and his mission. He taught as one having authority because he taught that the expected salvation was present in his person. The Rabbis taught that the Law was to be studied and done; Jesus taught that his word, which was the fulfilment and perfecting of the Law, was to be heard and done. Doing the divine will comes about through the acceptance of Jesus and his word.

## 2. Διδάσκειν IN JN

The verb διδάσκειν occurs in Jn at 6,59; 7,14.28.35; 8,20.28; 9,34; 14,26 and 18,20; διδαχή occurs at 7,16.17; 18,19; διδάσκαλος at 1,38; 3,2.10; 11,28; 13,13.14; 20,16; ῥαββί at 1,38.49; 3,2.26; 4,31; 6,25; 9,2; 11,8. With Jesus as subject, διδάσκειν occurs at Jn 6,59; 7,14.28.35; 8,20.(28) and 18,20; the διδαχή of Jesus is mentioned at 7,16.17 and 18,19.

Apart from the fleeting allusion to Jesus' teaching in (the) Synagogue at Capernaum (6,59), the reference to the διδάσκειν (διδαχή) of Jesus has been reserved for the momentous occasion of his ascent to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Tabernacles. The only other time Jesus' teaching will be mentioned will be at the end of his ministry (18,19f). When Jesus, standing before the High Priest, is questioned concerning his teaching and answers that he has taught openly in Synagogue and in the Temple, we can recall only one occasion in which he was said to have taught in the Temple: that of the Feast of the Tabernacles (Jn 7-8).

Jn 7,14-18, which serves as a prelude or introduction to the whole series of discourses which follow, is all centred around the idea of Jesus' διδάσκειν.<sup>14</sup> Although the term is not found at 8,59, the inclusion with 7,14 marks off all the discourses contained in these two chapters as "teaching" given in the Temple. During the course of the discourses we are constantly reminded that Jesus is teaching and that he is doing so in the Temple (Jn 7,14.16.17.28.35; 8,20.(28). It is as if the many instances in which Jesus "taught" in the Synagogue and Temple—custom mentioned not only in the Synoptics but also in Jn <sup>15</sup>—have been fused into one.

Now, chapters 7-8 contain what may be called the quintessence of

<sup>14</sup> See pp. 87; 170-172.

<sup>15</sup> Jn 18,20; comp. Mk 14,49, Par. Jesus teaches in the Temple: Mk 11,17; 12,35; 14,49 (Mt 26,55); Lk 21,37; Mt 21,23 (Lk 20,1). Jesus teaches in the Synagogue: Mt 4,23; 9,35; 13,54; Mk 1,21; 6,2; Lk 4,15.(16); 13,10.

Jesus' "public" revelatory discourses.<sup>16</sup> The "truth" he speaks during the Feast of the Tabernacles is the most elaborate disclosure of the mystery of his person to be found in the Fourth Gospel (only in chapter 5 do we have something somewhat similar), if we except the Farewell Discourses (which are given in private to his disciples). It is therefore the public (self-)revelation of Jesus which is placed by Jn under the sign of teaching—the *teaching of Jesus is (self-)revelation*.

That διδάσκειν is a term of revelation for Jn explains the tendency he has of using it in immediate conjunction with, or even interchangeably for λαλεῖν.<sup>17</sup> At 7,17 λαλεῖν and διδάσκειν are synonymous;<sup>18</sup> 7,28 (ἔκραξεν ... διδάσκων ὁ Ἰησοῦς) refers back to ἔδε παρηγοῖα λαλεῖ (v. 26; comp. 18,20); at 8,20.28 and 18,20 there is a strict parallelism between διδάσκειν and λαλεῖν. Διδάσκειν is a term of revelation in Jn. This is the key to understanding the Johannine usage of "teaching" and that which marks it off from the usage found in Judaism and in the Synoptics. It explains why: 1) teaching is, strictly speaking, the prerogative of Jesus, although the Father, the Spirit, the disciples (in dependence upon Jesus) may (rarely) be said to teach; 2) the teaching of Jesus is rooted in his mission; 3) teaching, whether it has the Father, the Spirit or the disciples as subject, always has the person of Jesus as its sole object.

1) We have seen that διδάσκειν almost always has Jesus as subject. Only once is the Father said to teach (8,28), but it is not men he teaches. At 6,45, however, men are said to be διδακτοὶ θεοῦ. It is probable, but not certain, that Jn has the teaching given by God in the Scriptures in mind<sup>19</sup> (it is also possible that the teaching of the Father is that given in and through Jesus).<sup>20</sup> The Spirit is said to teach only once (14,26)—he continues the work initiated by Jesus. The disciples are said (implicitly) to teach (again in dependence upon Jesus and in continuity with his "work") at 9,34. It is only natural that the term should be reserved for Jesus when one recalls that, in Jn, Jesus and Jesus alone is the Revealer.

<sup>16</sup> See what has been said above, pp. 57-58.

<sup>17</sup> On λαλεῖν as a term of revelation see pp. 197-208.

<sup>18</sup> Jn 5,45-47; 7,21-24.

<sup>19</sup> Rengstorff (*TWNT* IV, art. *μανθάνω*, 410, 10ff) suggests that *μαθών* at Jn 6,45 would be a reference to the study of Scripture since *μανθάνειν*, in its "proper" Jewish sense, always refers to the study of the Scriptures.

<sup>20</sup> This interpretation is suggested by Westcott (ad loc.) and seems preferable to an "inward teaching" (Barrett) which would be given directly by God.



2) Again, it is because διδάσκειν is a term of revelation, that Jesus' διδάσκειν is rooted in his mission. The thought is present in Jn 7,14-18 (see below), but receives its clearest expression at Jn 8,28. Jesus "speaks" what he has been "taught" by the Father. The "word" Jesus speaks, his teaching, is viewed as originating "from above"—a view which is completely foreign to the Synoptics. Although the idea of the perfect conformity of Jesus' "words" (teaching) with those (that) of God is not associated *directly* with his "mission" but expressed in other ways (cf. 7,18; 12,49; comp. 8,26,28), it is because Jesus is "sent" (has come from God) that he speaks of what he has seen and heard with the Father.<sup>21</sup> The "mission" of Jesus is the ultimate foundation of his teaching (revelation) but Jn, *speaking metaphorically*, presents Jesus as repeating what he has heard and what he has been taught by the one who sent him.

3) Because it is a term of revelation, διδάσκειν is not only reserved almost exclusively for Jesus' activity and rooted in his mission, it also has his person as its exclusive object. When Jesus teaches, the object is the same as that of his λαλεῖν—he reveals himself for what he is. Jn 6,59 represents the conclusion of the section in which Jesus presents himself as the bread come down from heaven and of the whole discourse in which Jesus reveals he is the bread of life. Jn 7,14. 16,17, we have seen, introduce the revelatory discourses which follow. Jn 7,28 is found in a section which deals immediately with Jesus' origin. Jn 8,20 is the conclusion of the section (8,12-20; see below) in which Jesus reveals himself as the light of the world. At Jn 8,28 it is everything Jesus says (λαλεῖν = διδάσκειν) about himself in this section (i.e., that he is from above, the Son, the one who is) which is the teaching he received and communicates. At 18,20 Jesus has his διδάσκειν embrace the whole of his revelatory mission (see below); διδαχή (v. 19) is used in the same sense. What God teaches Jesus is what Jesus reveals about himself (8,28); if men are said to be taught by God, the teaching leads to the acknowledgement of Jesus (6,45). The teaching of the Spirit consists in leading to a full understanding of what Jesus revealed about himself. The teaching of the disciples also deals with Christ's person (i.e., that he is "of God").

It is likewise because διδάσκειν is a term of revelation in Jn that his use of the term differs from that found in the Synoptics, in Qumran and in Judaism generally. Corresponding to the three points

<sup>21</sup> Vs. Rengstorf, *TWNT* II, 146, 35ff.

mentioned above we note the following differences between Jn and these writings :

- 1) Only Jesus (God, the Spirit, the disciples) may be said to "teach" (viz., only Jesus may be called teacher). The subject of διδάσκειν is never the Scribes or the Pharisees, as is sometimes the case in the Synoptics.<sup>22</sup> The title διδάσκαλος is not applied to anyone other than Jesus,<sup>23</sup> as is sometimes the case in the Synoptics.<sup>24</sup> The same may be said of the term ραββί. In Jn it is never applied to the Scribes or Pharisees,<sup>25</sup> even though Jn reflects the Palestinian tradition much more closely than the Synoptics in his use of this term.<sup>26</sup> Moses is implicitly presented as a teacher at Jn 9,28f, but Jn makes clear that he is the teacher of the Pharisees and the implication seems to be that the teaching of Moses should lead to recognize Jesus as the teacher κατ' ἐξοχήν. Jesus is presented as the prophet-like-Moses in Jn but, unlike the "Teacher of righteousness", he is not bound to the Torah in his teaching (cf. the following points) and therefore not subservient to Moses. It is Moses who typifies Christ and prepares his way; it is Jesus, not Moses, who is the true teacher. Unlike the "Teacher of righteousness" <sup>27</sup> Jesus is not presented as continuing the tradition of which Moses is the initiator and the supreme figure.
- 2) In Judaism a teacher acquires his knowledge at the school of some other Rabbi; he belongs to an unbroken line of tradition which goes back to Moses. In Jn the teaching of Jesus comes directly from the Father; Jesus is "taught" by him, by no one else (see below).
- 3) In the Fourth Gospel Jesus does not take the Torah as the object

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. Mk 1,22 (Mt 7,29); Mk 7,7 (Mt 15,9)—an OT quotation applied by Jesus to the Scribes and Pharisees; Lk 11,1 (John the Baptist); Mt 16,12 (the διδάχῃ of the Scribes and Pharisees).

<sup>23</sup> The case of Nicodemus serves to show that he is *not* the teacher of Israel. See below.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Mt 10,24.25(bis); Lk 2,46; 3,12; 6,40(bis).

<sup>25</sup> It is used only once of the Baptist, by his disciples (Jn 3,26).

<sup>26</sup> The title ραββί is avoided completely by Lk. Mt (Jesus) applies it once to the Scribes (23,7; comp. 23,8), but otherwise avoids applying it even to Jesus. He substitutes κύριος or διδάσκαλος to ραββί and only has Judas refer to Jesus as ραββί (Mt 26,25.49). The disciples in Mt never call Jesus ραββί. The title is not enough of a *Hoheitstitel* to warrant its use by the disciples of Jesus when addressing their "Lord". Cf. E. Lohse, *TWNT* VI, art. ραββί, 966. The title is reserved for Jesus by Mk.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Betz, *Offenbarung*, 61ff.

or starting point of his teaching, as he does in the Synoptics.<sup>28</sup> Although Jesus will occasionally quote a passage of Scripture, applying it to himself,<sup>29</sup> will make use of a specific scriptural passage in his disputes with the Jews,<sup>30</sup> or will refer to the Torah in general terms in defending himself against the Pharisees,<sup>31</sup> we never have anything quite like the Synoptic presentation, where Jesus' teaching is based on the Scriptures themselves and presented as the continuation of the teaching given therein.<sup>32</sup> One has the impression that, in Jn, any reference to the Torah in Jesus' teaching has an apologetic purpose and nothing more.<sup>33</sup> If teaching in Qumran is seen as "revelation", revelation itself is the discovery (disclosure) of the hidden meaning of the Torah. In Jn the teaching-revelation of Jesus no doubt casts light upon and opens up a new understanding of the Torah, but it is not there to explain the Torah nor to reveal its "hidden meaning" (as if the revelation Jesus brings were already contained therein). It is rather the other way around: the Torah opens man to the final revelation Jesus brings in his own person. It is in this sense that the coming of Jesus discloses the end and purpose of the Torah.

The break with Judaism and the Torah seems to be complete; *yet Jn marks not only the novelty and uniqueness of Jesus' "teaching", he also establishes some sort of relationship or contrast between the teaching of Jesus and that of Moses (the Torah).*

That Jn should use the term διδάσκειν at all is already an indication which should not be overlooked. In the NT and in the primitive community, as well as in Judaism generally, διδάσκειν and derivatives are bound to or associated with the Torah. The Greek influence, which will lead to a modification of the meaning these terms will have when used in later Christian writings, has not yet set in.<sup>34</sup> It is therefore only in a Jewish setting that these terms would have any

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<sup>28</sup> Rengstorf's otherwise excellent article on διδάσκειν (TWNT II) does not distinguish sufficiently between Johannine and Synoptic usage.

<sup>29</sup> Jn 1,51; 13,18; 15,25.

<sup>30</sup> Jn 6,45; 8,16.17; 10,34.

<sup>31</sup> Jn 5,45-47; 7,21-24.

<sup>32</sup> Lk 4,16ff; Mt 5-7; 15,3ff; 22,37ff, Par.

<sup>33</sup> We will be able to determine the precise relationship which exists between Jesus' teaching and the Law only at the end of our study since this question resolves itself in that of the relationship of Jesus himself to the Law.

<sup>34</sup> For the historical evolution of the term, cf. Rengstorf, TWNT II, 149, 11ff; esp. 150, 12ff; 159, 36ff; 167, 10ff.

significance during the NT period. Paul avoids διδάσκειν precisely because his communities are not Jewish.<sup>35</sup> They are not the ones to which the Torah was entrusted, they are not versed in the twofold Law; διδάσκειν would not have for them the resonance it would have for a Jew. That Jn should use the terms διδάσκειν (διδασχῇ,) διδάσκαλος, at once indicates that we are confronted with a "Jewish" category, that some relationship is being established or some contrast is being made between the teaching of Jesus and the Jewish (Rabbinic) concept of teaching. That such a contrast is intended is underlined by Jn in a novel and original manner and effectively brought to the reader's attention in four ways :

- 1) The setting of Jesus' teaching is *always* the Temple or Synagogue.
- 2) Jesus is presented as the true teacher of Israel, as opposed to Nicodemus, one of the Pharisees.
- 3) Jesus is accused of being a πλάνος by the Jews and Pharisees.
- 4) The teaching-revelation of Jesus is described in terms used to symbolize the Torah.

1) In the Synoptics Jesus teaches in the Temple and in the Synagogues,<sup>36</sup> but he does not exercise his activity as "teacher" exclusively in this setting.<sup>37</sup> In Jn Jesus teaches exclusively in the Temple (and Synagogue).<sup>38</sup> It is as if Jn wished to emphasize that Jesus' teaching is meant to bring to perfection (viz., replace) the teaching of his predecessors. The new revelation is given in the heart of Judaism's religious community; it is in the Temple Synagogue and in the Temple schoolroom<sup>39</sup> that many a Scribe had held learned

<sup>35</sup> "Diese Erscheinung erklärt sich ... sofort, wenn man sich die Schriftgebundenheit des Wortes auch im NT verdeutlicht. In einer Umgebung, die von der Schrift nichts wusste, wäre das διδάσκειν τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ebenso am falschen Platze gewesen, wie es in der Urgemeinde und überall im Verkehr mit der Judenschaft am rechten Platz war". Rengstorff, *TWNT* II, 149, 12ff.

<sup>36</sup> See p. 79, n. 15.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Mt 11,1; Mk 2,13; 4,1,2; 6,6.34; 8,31; 9,31; 10,1; Lk 5,3.17; 13,12.26; 23,5. Mt 5,2.19 does not take place in the Temple, but the scene evokes Sinai. Mt would thus seem to be the one who is closest to Jn since only in one case (Mt 11,1; at Mt 22,16 no indication is given) is Jesus said to teach in a place other than the Temple.

<sup>38</sup> Jn 6,59; 7,14.28; 8,20; 18,20. Jesus' διδασχῇ in 7,16.17 and 18,19 is the teaching he gives in the Temple (cf. 7,14.28; 18,20). On the lips of the Jews, Jn 7,35 represents a misunderstanding: Jesus will not leave the centre of Judaism (the Temple) in order to teach in the Diaspora; this will be the task of the disciples.

<sup>39</sup> It is not clear whether the "Schoolroom" of the Temple was distinct from the Temple Synagogue, but this would seem to be the case. Cf. W. Schrage, *TWNT* VII, art. συναγωγή, 821, 9ff and n. 145.

disputations concerning the Law and it is the Temple that Jesus came to cleanse and to replace (Jn 2,13-22). It is only fitting that the first and only mention of Jesus' public teaching in Jerusalem should have the Temple as its setting.

2) We have already called attention to the fact that the title διδάσκαλος is attributed by Lk and Mt to other persons besides Jesus.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, Mt applies both διδάσκαλος and ῥαββί to Jesus with great reluctance.<sup>41</sup> Jn, on the contrary, not only reserves both διδάσκαλος and ῥαββί for Jesus, but uses them of him rather frequently.<sup>42</sup> If the fourth evangelist does not hesitate to designate the Son of God as a διδάσκαλος (ῥαββί), it is because they have become "honorific titles" <sup>43</sup> behind which we can detect a polemical tendency.

There is only one other person <sup>44</sup> in Jn who is called διδάσκαλος and this exception only serves to make clear that Jesus is the only true teacher. At Jn 3,10 Jesus calls Nicodemus "the teacher of Israel". The use of the definite article (ὁ διδάσκαλος) and the qualification of Nicodemus as the teacher τοῦ Ἰσραήλ can leave little doubt as to what is implied in this title: Nicodemus is presented as

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Mt 10,24f (2×); Lk 2,46; 3,12; 6,40 (2×). Rengstorf (TWNT II, 154, 41ff) concludes from this that the title διδάσκαλος (ῥαββί) was applied to Jesus in the ordinary sense of the word (as when it refers to a Pharisee, Scribe, John the Baptist or Nicodemus) and that it was not a *Würdeprädikat*. What may be conceded for the Synoptics does not hold good for Jn.

<sup>41</sup> The disciples, with the exception of Judas (Mt 26,25.29 (= Mk), never call Jesus ῥαββί. Nor do the disciples ever call Jesus διδάσκαλος except once, when speaking to others (26,18). The manner in which Mt seeks to avoid applying the title to Jesus and the reason which prompts him to do so can best be seen from those instances in which he substitutes κύριος for a Markan διδάσκαλος or ῥαββί (Mt 17,4; 20,33; 8,25). Mt thus indicates that Jesus is more than a Rabbi or "teacher" in the traditional sense, but rather "der Herr der Seinen". Cf. Lohse, TWNT VI, 965, 34ff.

<sup>42</sup> Διδάσκαλος: 1,38; 3,2.(10); 11,28; 13,13.14; 20,16. ῥαββί: 1,38.49; 3,2.26; 4,31; 6,25; 9,2; 11,2. Παββούνι occurs once (Jn 20,16). Jn uses the term ῥαββί more often (8×) than Mt and Mk put together (7×). Lk, significantly enough, avoids the term.

<sup>43</sup> So much so that Jesus can say: φωνεῖτέ με Ὁ διδάσκαλος καὶ Ὁ κύριος (13,13; cf. v. 14: ὁ κύριος καὶ ὁ διδάσκαλος).

<sup>44</sup> On Jn 9,28, where Moses is *implicitly* called διδάσκαλος by the Pharisees, see pp. 107-109. The disciples of John address their master as ῥαββί (3,26). This is the only true exception in the Fourth Gospel (vs. Rengstorf, TWNT II, 154, 28). But here again Jn has the Baptist declare that Jesus is the only one who does not speak (teach) in an "earthly way".

the (qualified) teacher <sup>45</sup> of Israel.<sup>46</sup> Why is Nicodemus given such a prestigious title, out of all proportion with his actual achievements and position?

The controversy of Jesus with the Pharisees (Jews) is visible in Jn's presentation of Nicodemus. He appears at the outset (3,1ff) of Jesus' ministry, at the height of the controversy between Jesus and the Pharisees (7,50f) and after his crucifixion (19,39). The description of Nicodemus is stereotyped (compare 3,1f with 7,50 and 19,39). The constant element is that Nicodemus *came* to Jesus. Although the expression *ἔρχεσθαι πρὸς Ἰησοῦν* in Jn can often mean "to believe" in Jesus, Jn does not seem to wish to designate Nicodemus as a disciple of Jesus. Nevertheless, the insistence that Nicodemus had "come" to Jesus is noteworthy and has meaning only if Nicodemus' having "come" to Jesus is seen as a significant event. The significance is to be discovered in the second element of importance in the description of Nicodemus: he is one of the leaders, one of the Pharisees. It is the combination of these two elements which makes of Nicodemus an important figure of the Fourth Gospel. As opposed to that of his colleagues, his attitude towards Jesus is open and positive. He recognizes that he is a teacher who has come from God (3,2), he defends Jesus against the Pharisees (7,50f) and is associated with Joseph of Arimathea (*ὢν μαθητὴς τοῦ Ἰησοῦ κεκρυμμένος δὲ διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων*) in the burial of Jesus. Indeed, when one compares Jn 7,48 with 7,50 and 3,1 and bears in mind what is stated at 12,42 one may well ask whether Jn does not wish to present Nicodemus as a future disciple of Jesus. However that may be, Nicodemus, one of the Pharisees and a leader of the Jews, comes to Jesus as a *μαθητὴς* to a *διδάσκαλος*. He addresses Jesus as "ῥαββί" and adds: *οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐλήλυθας διδάσκαλος* (the Pharisees at Jn 9,16.24.28f take quite a different view!). The teaching Jesus imparts to his pupil proves too

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<sup>45</sup> This is admitted by the commentaries. So Bernard, Bultmann (103, n. 1), Barrett, Lightfoot, vs. Rengstorff (*TWNT* II, 154, n. 32) and Lagrange, who affirms: "L'article ... ne pose pas Nicodème comme le maître d'Israel par excellence; l'éloge serait excessif ou la moquerie trop vive".

<sup>46</sup> Bernard is no doubt right in paraphrasing "the Israel of God". *Ἰσραήλ* in the Fourth Gospel is a designation for the "people of God" not for the Jewish nation as such. Cf. S. Pancaro, " 'People of God' in St. John's Gospel?" *NTS* 16 (1969-70) 114-129, 123-125. Id., "The Relationship of the Church to Israel in the Gospel of St John" *NTS* 21 (1974-75) 396-405.

profound for him; he is not able to understand (the proper task of a disciple) even though Jesus is speaking of "earthly" not of "heavenly" things. Nicodemus is obliged to confess his ignorance (3,9) and Jesus exclaims: *οὐ εἶ ὁ διδάσκαλος τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ταῦτα οὐ γινώσκεις;* (3,10). The polemical undertones can hardly be denied. The true teacher of Israel is Jesus, not one of the Pharisees, not even the most enlightened of their number.

3) Our exegesis of Jn 7,14-18; 7,45-49; 9,24-34 and 18,19-24 furnishes the strongest evidence that Jesus is being contrasted with Moses and the Rabbis (viz., his disciples with the Rabbis) and that the teaching of Jesus (and of his disciples) is being contrasted with the Torah.<sup>47</sup>

For the Jews and the Pharisees Jesus is an unauthorized teacher, his teaching is *πλάνη*, it is contrary to the Law; for Jesus (for Jn and Christians) Jesus is the Revealer and his teaching is the fullness of revelation—it cannot be opposed to the Law.

4) The Johannine symbols of the "living water" and the "bread of life" will be analyzed in detail in Part Four. We will see that the symbolism affords a contrast between the Law (the water of Jacob's well, the manna) and the teaching-revelation of Jesus (the "living water", the "bread of life").

An important text for the contrast established by Jn between the teaching of Jesus and that of the OT (Torah) is Jn 6,45, which forms an integral part of Jesus' discourse on the "bread of life" (his teaching-revelation). We will see <sup>48</sup> that, here too, the teaching of Jesus is being contrasted with the Law.

### 3. JESUS IS ACCUSED OF BEING A *πλάνος*

#### A) *Jn 7,14-18*

The verses form a definite unit. The unity is underlined by the "Stichwort" (or better: by the theme) "teaching": v. 14 *ἐδίδασκεν*; v. 15 *γράμματα—μεμαθηκώς*; v. 16 *διδαχή*; v. 17 *διδαχή—λαλῶ*; v. 18 *λαλῶν*. Jesus goes up to the Temple to teach. The object of his

<sup>47</sup> See the following pages.

<sup>48</sup> The text will be dealt with in Part Two as a representative example of the manner in which Jesus appeals to the OT (Torah) in defence of his teaching.

teaching is not mentioned. The term can be used absolutely. For a Jew "to teach" can only mean to expound upon the written and oral Law, as we have seen. In all appearance we are simply dealing with a Rabbi going up to the Temple to explain the Torah. The reaction of the Jews confirms this impression. They are indignantly surprised.<sup>49</sup> *Γράμματα εἰδέναι* and *μεμαθηκώς* both have overtones.<sup>50</sup> It is as if Jesus were explaining the Torah (Scriptures—*τὰ γράμματα*) as a Rabbi would do, without having been a *תלמיד* of a recognized Rabbi, let alone a *חכם תלמיד*! <sup>51</sup> With what authority does he teach? The impression we receive is that of an unqualified teacher (*ῥαββί*) giving a teaching which is suspect, which is not in conformity with the Law.

The impression is fully confirmed by the declaration Jesus makes in his own defence. His *διδαχή* is not his own but of the one who sent him (v. 16b). V. 17b marks a double progression over v. 16b: the one who sent Jesus is God; *ἡ ἐμὴ διδαχή οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὴ* means that he does not speak of himself. With v. 18 we pass from the "teaching" ("speaking") to the person of the speaker (teacher) and from the first to the third person. In the form of a general principle,<sup>52</sup>

<sup>49</sup> We believe that Jn 7,15 follows upon 7,14 and not upon Jn 5,47 (see the Excursus on pp. 169ff). The surprise is one of indignation rather than admiration, as the scornful *οἶτος* and the following verses indicate.

<sup>50</sup> Although the primary meaning of *γράμματα εἰδέναι* is "to know letters" and the *γράμματα* of v. 15 (without the article) means "writings" in a general sense, learning in Israel (even the first lessons of reading) had the Scriptures as its foundation (a *γραμματεὺς* is a doctor of the Law!) so that *γράμματα εἰδέναι* also alludes to knowledge of the Scriptures. (See what is said on this in the Excursus at the end of Chapter Six.) Barrett (ad loc.) rightly rejects a direct reference to the "quotation" of Scripture by Jesus and maintains he is carrying on a learned disputation in the manner of a Rabbi, but which has his relation to and mission from the Father as its object. As for *μανθάνειν*, in Jewish circles it was inseparable from the study of the Torah (cf. Rengstorf, *TWNT* IV, 401ff) as can be seen from its use both in the OT (*ibid.*, 402, 37ff) and in Rabbinic Judaism (*ibid.*, 403, 20ff).

<sup>51</sup> On the origin and nature of the "schools" (Bet Sefer, Bet Midrash), cf. Moore, *Judaism*, I, 308-322, esp. 314ff. In Rabbinism *תלמידים* were distinguished in the two above-mentioned classes. The *תלמידים חכמים* had the right to express their personal views in matters of the Law, but their official recognition as "authorities" came only through ordination and formal assumption into the Rabbinic "college". Cf. Rengstorf, *TWNT* IV, 434, 15ff.

<sup>52</sup> V. 18 comes as a sort of gloss since a) it could be omitted without impairing the sequence of ideas; b) it is obviously explanatory; c) it introduces a new concept (*δόξα* *ζῆτεῖν*). For these reasons it seems erroneous to maintain that the *δόξα*-theme binds



v. 18 explains what distinguishes one who speaks of himself from one who is ἀληθής and in whom there is no ἀδικία, (i.e., who does not speak of himself): the former seeks his own glory, the latter seeks the glory of the sender.

Jesus is defending himself as if his teaching were to be placed on the same footing as that of any other "man of God", of any other prophet.<sup>53</sup> Even the condition which must be met if the divine authority behind Jesus' teaching is to be perceived does not seem to go beyond this horizon: one must be willing to do the will of God. If a prophet or teacher<sup>54</sup> were to give an authentic teaching (in conformity with the Law), it would be recognized as such only by those who are willing to do the will of God (to obey, follow the Law);<sup>55</sup> similarly, the teaching of Jesus will be recognized as being "of God" only by those who are willing to do God's will. Such is the surface meaning of Jesus' apologia, but the reasoning is cogent only if we go beyond it.

Loisy<sup>56</sup> has pointed out, quite correctly, that the reasoning behind the general principle enunciated in v. 18 is valid only when applied to Jesus and if one takes everything the evangelist says elsewhere about Jesus and his mission into account. That a messenger seek the glory of the one who sent him guarantees the message only if the authority of the sender is beyond question and the mission certain. Jn therefore wishes to say that, since Jesus is *the* one whom God sends and his mission is verified by this action—totally directed as

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the "original" units Jn 5,41-47 and Jn 7,15-24 together (Bultmann, 202ff). If the evangelist was using a "source" there is no reason not to ascribe the whole of verse 18 to him, rather than καὶ ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν only (vs. Bultmann).

<sup>53</sup> The prophets were directly dependent upon God for their "teaching"—God himself was their master and teacher. For them there was no other "teacher", not even Moses himself. Cf. Rengstorf, *TWNT* IV, 434, 5ff.

<sup>54</sup> In later Judaism and in the NT period, "prophets" were no longer a class distinct from (much less opposed to) that of the "teachers" (Rabbis, Scribes, the "Wise"). The two currents were fused into one (cf. R. Meyer, *TWNT* VI, art. *προφήτης*, 818, 35ff; esp. 819, 6ff). This is particularly visible in Qumran, where the "Teacher" is a prophet-like-Moses (cf. Betz, *Offenbarung*, 62-68; 88-99) and Moses himself was considered *the* "teacher" (1Q 22, 1.3), as he was in Rabbinism (cf. Rengstorf, *TWNT* IV, 439, 33ff).

<sup>55</sup> See what is said on Jn 7,19 (pp. 130-138) and on ποιεῖν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ (pp. 377-379; 389-397).

<sup>56</sup> Comm., 500.

it is to the glory of the Father—*Jesus is the Revealer* (he is ἀληθής, he speaks the “truth”, the “word” of God).

That this is the only interpretation which does justice to the text is borne out by the terms used :

1) ‘Ο πέμψας in v. 18 is not to be taken in a non-technical sense. The context is against this (cf. v. 16 : τοῦ πέμψαντός με = τοῦ θεοῦ v. 17) and so is Johannine usage. ‘Ο πέμψας in Jn is a *terminus technicus* which always refers to the Father. Furthermore, except in one case,<sup>57</sup> it always refers to the “mission” of Jesus, entrusted to him by the Father.<sup>58</sup>

2) Ζητεῖν τὴν δόξαν τοῦ πεμφάντος. The formula will be discussed in greater detail when we consider Jn 5,41ff,<sup>59</sup> but we can already say that δόξα at 7,18 and in other passages of the Gospel has the meaning “honour”, “reputation”, without losing its deeper meaning of “glory”, as Thüsing rightly maintains.<sup>60</sup> The claim of being ἀληθής can be made only by him who seeks the δόξα of the Father who sent him, who glorifies God<sup>61</sup> and, in Jn, such a one can be no other than Jesus.<sup>62</sup> Being the only one who is one with the Father, it is only the ἔργον of Jesus (i.e., the revelation of his Sonship and of the Father working in him) which is said to glorify the Father.<sup>63</sup>

3) Ἀπ’ ἐμαυτοῦ οὐ λαλῶ. Even though Jesus’ words cannot be separated from his works, his λαλεῖν can embrace his whole revelatory

<sup>57</sup> At Jn 1,33 ὁ πέμψας is used in conjunction with the ministry of the Baptist.

Jn 4,34; 5,23.24.30.37; 6,38.39.44; 7,16.28.33; etc.

<sup>59</sup> See pp. 234ff.

<sup>60</sup> *Erhöhung*, 198.

<sup>61</sup> The two expressions ζητεῖν τὴν δόξαν and δοξάζειν may be used interchangeably, as can be seen by comparing Jn 8,50 and 8,54 :

|                                 |                       |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| a) ἐγὼ δὲ οὐ ζητῶ τὴν δόξαν μου | b) ἔστιν ὁ ζητῶν      |
| a') εἰάν ἐγὼ δοξάζω ἑμαυτόν,    | b') ἔστιν ὁ πατήρ μου |
| ἡ δόξα μου οὐδὲν ἔστιν          | ὁ δοξάζων με          |

<sup>62</sup> In the Fourth Gospel it is, in ultimate analysis, only Jesus who glorifies the Father, notwithstanding such texts as 14,13; 15,8; 16,14; 17,10. These texts are all found in the Farewell Discourses. It is the time of the Church which begins with Jesus’ return to the Father. His disciples set forth his mission and it is their effective mission to the world which glorifies the Father (in the Son) and the Son. It is so *because* the disciples are actively dependent upon the Son and actively united with the Father in the Son (15,8; comp. 17,21-23). Cf. Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 107-123. The glory the disciples receive and which they manifest to the world (thereby glorifying the Father and the Son) is the glory of the Father which is given to them by the Son (17,22). *Ibid.*, 174ff.

<sup>63</sup> Jn 17,4 is the capital text. For all that is implied here see Thüsing, *ibid.*, 50-75.

mission. Of its very nature, the *λαλεῖν* of Jesus is to speak the words of God.<sup>64</sup> He cannot speak on his own account but only say what he has seen and heard with the Father, what the Father has told him to say<sup>65</sup>—he alone has seen God, he alone can reveal him.<sup>66</sup> This metaphorical language expresses the fact that Jesus is the revelation of the Father. His words (and deeds) reveal nothing besides his own person in its relationship to the Father.<sup>67</sup> Jesus reveals the Father by revealing himself, since he is one with the Father. That is why Jn can pass from the *διδαχῇ—λαλεῖν* of Jesus (v. 16.17a) to the person of Jesus (v. 17b.18). Because Jesus seeks the glory of (glorifies) the Father he is the Revealer (does not speak of himself); vice versa : because he is the Revealer (does not speak of himself but in total unity with and dependence on the Father) he alone seeks the glory of (glorifies) the Father.

Jn has deliberately moulded the idea of the Son of God (the Revealer) in the first instance on the prophetic model.<sup>68</sup> Jn 7,16-18 has Jesus speak as if he were a prophet, defending himself against the accusation of being a false prophet whose teaching is not God's (goes against the revelation-teaching given through Moses, the Law), but the terminology and the reasoning show that Jesus is saying a great deal more than that he is a true prophet. The Jews think of Jesus as a false prophet, a false teacher; Jn presents him as the Revealer, the Son of God.

These two levels of meaning are also clearly present in the expression : ἀληθὴς ἐστὶν καὶ ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν, to which we now turn.

<sup>64</sup> Jn 3,34; 8,47; 17,8.

<sup>65</sup> Jn 3,11; 8,26.38.40; 12,49f; 14,10.

<sup>66</sup> Jn 1,18; 6,46; comp. 5,37.

<sup>67</sup> Jn identifies Jesus as the *λόγος* in the Prologue only; elsewhere he speaks of the *λόγος* of Jesus (of God). The qualification shows that *λόγος*, used absolutely, means "Jesus". Cf. G. Kittel, *TWNT* IV, art. *λέγω*, 132. Bultmann is therefore right in affirming that what Jesus reveals is that he is the Revealer—provided the "dass" is made to include all Jesus tells us about himself : that he comes from the Father, from above, from God, was sent by the Father, is the Son, one with the Father; that he is therefore the light of the world, the way, the life, the true bread, etc.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Dodd, *Interpretation*, 255.

## B) Ἀληθής ἐστιν καὶ ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν—Jn 7,18

Bultmann<sup>69</sup> holds that the Jews would be accusing Jesus of “Lüge” (ἀδικία): Jesus would be affirming that he is “wahrhaftig” (ἀληθής).<sup>70</sup> The opposition ἀληθής—ἀδικία would correspond to the opposition שקר—אמת, because ἀδικία is found “in der LXX vielfach für שקר”. Bultmann’s supposition may be correct, the foundation he adduces is clearly insufficient. It is open to the following objections:

1) ἀδικία does not very often render שקר in the LXX (vs. ἄδικος and ἀδικως, which quite frequently render שקר); it is most often a translation for the various terms for “sin”;<sup>71</sup>

2) where the LXX presents us with the formula ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν or an equivalent expression, ἀδικία never translates שקר;<sup>72</sup>

3) the opposition ἀλήθεια—ἀδικία is not at all frequent in the LXX (nor is the opposition שקר—אמת very frequent in the MT).<sup>73</sup> The pair which is found frequently is ἀλήθεια—δικαιοσύνη (which corresponds to אמת—צדק in the MT).<sup>74</sup>

In view of these factors, one would have to maintain that, if Jn is reflecting the LXX (MT), אמת—צדק (ה)—ἀλήθεια—δικαιοσύνη rather than שקר—אמת (ה)—ἀδικία lies behind Jn 7,18. Ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν would be the negative formulation for δίκαιός ἐστιν, δίκαιος in the LXX corresponding as it does regularly to צדק. By saying that Jesus ἀληθής ἐστιν καὶ ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν, Jn would be affirming that he is אמת וצדיק. This possibility is attractive not only because Jn will set out to show in chapter 9 (see above) that Jesus is not a ἁμαρτωλός (רשע)—which is the exact opposite of being δίκαιος (צדיק)—but also because in Jn 1,14.19 he predicates χάρις καὶ ἀλήθεια—which correspond to

<sup>69</sup> Comm. 207, n. 7.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 207, n. 5.

<sup>71</sup> Only in seven cases does ἀδικία translate שקר, all occurrences being limited to the translation of the Ps! On the contrary, ἀδικία translates עון 81×, עולה 14×, עול 9×, חמס 13× and פשע 7×.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Dt 32,4; 1 K 14,41; 20,8; 25,24; 2 K 14,32; 2 Chron 19,7; Tob 14,10 (S); Ps 7,3; 16,3; 91,15; Mal 2,6. In all these cases ἀδικία translates עון, עולה, or עול (exception: Ps 16,3 = רמס).

<sup>73</sup> But see what is said below on the opposition ἀλήθεια — ἀδικία (אמת — שקר) in the Wisdom literature and p. 93, nn. 76-77 in particular.

<sup>74</sup> The pair ἀλήθεια — δικαιοσύνη is found at: Gen 32,11; 3 K 3,6; Tob 1,3; 4,5f; 12,8 (S); 14,7; Ps 14,2; 35,6f; 39,11; 44,5; 70,22.24; 84,11.12; 87,12f; 88,15; 95,13; 118,75.138.160; 142,1; Prov 20,28; Wisd 5,6; Zech 8,8; Is 11,5; 26,2.10; 45,19; 48,1; Jer 4,2. The pair ἀληθής — δίκαιος is found in Wisd 2,17.18; the pair ἀληθινός — δίκαιος in Dt 25,15; 32,4 (πιστός); Tob 3,2; Job 1,1; 17,8; 27,17; Is 59,4.

In all these cases, where there is a Hebrew equivalent, δικαιοσύνη and δίκαιος translate אמונה, אמת, אמן, אמנם; ἀλήθεια, ἀληθής and ἀληθινός translate צדק, צדיק, צדקה. The exceptions are: Gen 23,11 (חסד — אמת); Is 45,19 (שלום — צדק); Prov 20,28 (חסד — אמת); Dt 25,15 (שלום — צדק) and the texts of Job. Dt 32,4, which is a very interesting parallel to Jn 7,18, has in the MT: אין עול — אמונה = LXX: πιστός — οὐκ ἔστιν ἀδικία — δίκαιος.

**חַסֵּד וְאֱמֶת**—of Jesus. In the OT it is God who is **אֱמֶת וְצִדִּיק** (*ἀληθὴς καὶ δίκαιος*), just as it is God who is full of **חַסֵּד וְאֱמֶת**.<sup>75</sup> The expression *ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν* is furthermore found used of God himself in the LXX.<sup>76</sup> Jn would be affirming that Jesus is full of **חַסֵּד וְאֱמֶת** and that he is **אֱמֶת וְצִדִּיק**, like God himself; the Jews would be accusing Jesus of being “unreliable” (of lacking *Zuverlässigkeit*) and of being a “sinner”.

A possible influence of the formula **אֱמֶת וְצִדִּיק** cannot be discarded (we will return upon this possibility in discussing Jn 7,19: *ποιεῖν τὸν νόμον*), but the context and a number of other reasons lead to believe that the opposition *ἀληθής—ἀδικία* is equivalent to *ἀληθής—ψευδός, ψεύστης* (**שֶׁקֶר—אֱמֶת**) and that the background is not the LXX nor the MT (vs. Bultmann). There is a body of literature in which the opposition *ἀλήθεια—ἀδικία, ψεύδος, πλάνη* is current. In the LXX the opposition *ἀλήθεια—ἀδικία*, translating **שֶׁקֶר—אֱמֶת** (where there is a Hebrew equivalent), is found in texts which belong to the Wisdom current.<sup>77</sup> In this literature one also finds the opposition *πλανᾶν—ἀλήθεια, ψεύδος—ἀλήθεια*. The opposition *ἀλήθεια—ἀδικία, ψεύδος, πλάνη* is especially common in the Testament of the XII.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>75</sup> As far as we were able to ascertain, **אֱמֶת וְצִדִּיק** or **צִדִּיק וְאֱמֶת**, is not a fixed formula and is not found predicated of God, as is the case with **חַסֵּד וְאֱמֶת** (cf. Gen 24,49; 47,29; Ex 34,6; Jos 2,14; 2 Sam 2,6; 15,20; Ps 25,10; 61,8; etc.—predicated of God: Ex 34,6; Ps 25,10; 86,15; comp. 85,11). But God in the OT is not only “truthful” and “steadfast”; he is also “just” (**צִדִּיק**) and the pair **אֱמֶת—צִדִּיק** (*ἀλήθεια—δικαιοσύνη*) is well attested.

<sup>76</sup> 2 Chron 19,7: *οὐκ ἔστιν μετὰ κυρίου θεοῦ ἡμῶν ἀδικία* (Heb. **עוֹלָה**); Ps 91(92),15: *εὐθὺς κύριος ὁ θεός... καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ* (Heb. **עוֹלָה**). Dt 32,4 offers a very close parallel to Jn 7,18:

MT: **אֵל אֱמוּנָה וְאֵין עוֹל צִדִּיק וְיִשְׂרָאֵל**

LXX: *θεὸς πιστός (= ἀληθής), καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀδικία, δίκαιος καὶ ὁσῖος κύριος*

The parallelism is very close, especially in view of the fact that the LXX translates **אֱמוּנָה** by *πιστός* (sometimes by *ἀληθινός*), *ἀληθής* being used to render **אֱמֶת**, not **אֱמוּנָה**. This text is particularly interesting inasmuch as it shows that *ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν* and *δίκαιός ἐστιν* are equivalent; in choosing between **אֱמֶת—צִדִּיק** and **שֶׁקֶר—אֱמֶת**, we are not dealing with an aut-aut. (On the equivalence **שֶׁקֶר—עוֹלָה**, see below).

<sup>77</sup> *Ἀλήθεια—ἀδικία*: Tob 4,5.6; 12,8; 13,5.6; Ps 118,29.30 (Heb. **שֶׁקֶר—אֱמוּנָה**); Dan 9,13 (Heb. **עוֹן—אֱמֶת**); Mic 7,19.20 (Heb. **עוֹן—חַטָּא—אֱמֶת**); 1 Esd 4,37. *Ἀλήθεια—ἀδικος*: 1 Esd 4,36.37; Sir 27,9f; Job 36,4 (**אֱמוּנָה—שֶׁקֶר**); Prov 11,18 (**שֶׁקֶר—אֱמֶת**). *Ἀληθινός—ἀδικος*: Prov 12,19 (**שֶׁקֶר—אֱמֶת**). The only text which does not belong to the Wisdom current (Mic 7,19.20) does not have **אֱמֶת—שֶׁקֶר** but **עוֹן—אֱמֶת** in the original Hebrew. Is 59,3.4 has the combination *ἀνομία—ἀδικία—δικαία—ἀληθινή* (Heb. **עוֹל—שֶׁקֶר—אֱמוּנָה—צִדִּיק**), but *ἀδικία* translates **עוֹל** not **שֶׁקֶר** (which is translated by *ἀνομία*), nor are we dealing with a strict opposition *ἀληθινή—ἀδικία*.

<sup>78</sup> Test R 3,2ff. The seven *πνεύματα τῆς πλάνης* (3,2), of which one is the *πνεῦμα ψεύδους* (3,5) and one the *πνεῦμα ἀδικίας* (3,6), lead away from the “truth” (*ἀλήθεια*) (3,8). Test D 1,3; 2,1; 6,8; (*ἀλήθεια—ψεύδος*); Test A 5,3 (*ἀλήθεια—ψεύδος / δίκαιον—ἀδικον*); 5,4 (*πλανᾶν—ἀλήθεια*); Test Jud 20,1.3 (A S' l.v.): *ἀλήθεια—πλάνη*; Test Jos 1,3 (l.v.): *ἀλήθεια—πλανᾶν*. Test G 3,1 (*ἀλήθεια—πλανᾶσθαι*); 5,1 (*ἀλήθεια—ψεύδος*).

It corresponds to the opposition <sup>79</sup> **מַרְמָה, שׁוֹי, כֹּזֵב** (תַּעֲהָ, עוֹלָה) – **אֱמֶת** found in Qumran.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>79</sup> *Ἀλήθεια—ψεύδος, πλάνη, ἀδικία; מַרְמָה, שׁוֹי, כֹּזֵב (תַּעֲהָ, עוֹלָה) in the Wisdom literature, the Testament of the XII Patriarchs and Qumran*

The opposition is found in a dualistic context which begins to make its appearance (but is hardly visible) in the Wisdom literature<sup>81</sup> and is found fully developed in the Testament of the XII and Qumran. The dualism is not an “ontological” or “cosmological” dualism, such as that found in the Gnostic literature, but a “moral-religious” dualism: the opposition between good and evil.<sup>82</sup> The world is divided into two “Machtsphären”: on the one side God, his angels and those who belong to this “sphere” of influence; on the other Beliar and his angels and those who belong to this “sphere” of influence. The two spheres are characterized as the world of light, truth, life and as the world of darkness, falsehood (untruth), death. One belongs to one or the other according to whether one lives and acts in conformity with or in opposition to the salvific will and design of God.

This salvific plan or design (will) has been revealed by God and it is the very revelation of these secret designs or mysteries which receives the name of “truth” (*ἀλήθεια, אֱמֶת*) in these writings.<sup>83</sup> Hence, the dualism we have just mentioned

<sup>79</sup> The correspondence of the Hebrew and Greek terms may be gathered from the LXX where *ἀδικία* corresponds quite often to **עוֹלָה**, *πλάνη* regularly renders **תַּעֲהָ** and *ψεύδος* (*ψεудής*) corresponds to **שׁוֹי, כֹּזֵב**, occasionally to **שׂוֹא**.

<sup>80</sup> In Qumran, IQS 3,13-4,26 is the most important text for the opposition **אֱמֶת – עוֹלָה** (cf. 3,19 (bis); 4,17.18.19.20.23.24.25), which is also found elsewhere (cf. IQS 5,10; 6,15; 8,9f; 9,17; IQH 15,25). The opposition is that which maintains between “light” and “darkness”. This same dualistic outlook is reflected in the opposed pairs: **שׁוֹי – אֱמֶת** (IQS 4,9—the spirit of “iniquity”, who is opposed to the spirit of “truth”, is at the source of **שׁוֹי**—and IQS 4,21; IQH 5,26.27); **תַּעֲהָ – אֱמֶת** (IQS 5,10.11; IQH 4,25; CD 2,13; 3,14.15); **תַּעֲהָ – אֱמֶת** (IQH 2,14); **כֹּזֵב – אֱמֶת** (IQH 4,14.16). The opposition **אֱמֶת – עוֹלָה** is especially visible in the designation of the “community” and its members as **בְּנֵי אֱמֶת, בֵּית יְחִיד** (IQS 2,24.26; 4,5.6; 5,6; 8,9) and of the opposed group as **אֱנֹשִׁי, אֲדַת אֱנֹשִׁי, בְּנֵי עוֹל** (IQS 3,21; 5,1f.10; 8,13; 9,17), which, practically, is identical with the opposition **בְּנֵי עוֹל – בְּנֵי צְדָק** (IQS 3,20.21). For a commentary of IQS 3,13-4,26, cf. Becker, *Heil Gottes*, 84ff. In 3,13ff the dualism is embodied in the two “spirits”, in 4,15ff the opposition is mostly between **אֱמֶת** and **(עוֹלָה)** as such: they are powers of dominion, “Machtsphäre” which exercise dominion in and through man’s deeds.

<sup>81</sup> H. Braun, *TWNT* VI, art. *πλανῶ*, 238, 4ff.

<sup>82</sup> For a good summary of the distinctive features of the dualism found in Jn and Qumran, as opposed to that found in the Gnostic literature, based on the examination of the idea of “truth”, cf. Becker, *Heil Gottes*, 217-237.

<sup>83</sup> This is an obvious over-simplification. As found in the Apocalyptic literature, *ἀλήθεια* may be defined broadly as the “revelation of God’s mysteries” (although it also has a “moral” sense). Cf. I. de la Potterie, “L’arrière-fond du thème johannique de vérité”, *StudEv* I, 277-294; esp. 279-283. On the different shades of meaning **אֱמֶת** assumes in Qumran, cf. Becker, *op. cit.*, 68-70; 155-160; 177-180; 186.

can take on the form of an opposition between "truth" and "falsehood, error, lie". It is obvious that, in such a setting, *ψεῦδος* and *πλάνη* take on a special meaning which corresponds to the particular meaning "truth" (their contrary) has. There is a direct contrast or opposition between the "truth" and *ψεῦδος*, *πλάνη*. Just as the "truth" has its origin in God and leads to the realization of his salvific design ("truth" also has a "moral" dimension), so *ψεῦδος* and *πλάνη* have their origin in the devil (evil spirits) and are active forces opposed to God's "truth", to the realization of his salvific design. *Ψεῦδος* and *πλάνη* can therefore be opposed to *ἀλήθεια* in much the same way as *ἀδικία*. The term *ἀδικία* is not perfectly equivalent to *ψεῦδος* and *πλάνη*,<sup>84</sup> but the three are sufficiently close to be used in association with one another and all three are found as antonyms of *ἀλήθεια*. Like *ἀνομία* (the closest equivalent of *ἀδικία*),<sup>85</sup> *ἀδικία*, *ψεῦδος* and *πλάνη* are terms which designate active opposition to God's salvific design.

There is one aspect of *ἀλήθεια* (אמת) and its contraries *ἀδικία*, *ψεῦδος*, *πλάνη* (שקר, כזב, תעה, עוליה) which is particularly important: its association (identity) with the Law.

Already in the OT, in the Wisdom literature in particular, *ἀλήθεια* is associated with the Law.<sup>86</sup> The association does not come as a surprise. If "truth" is the revealed, providential design of God, the Law is the revealed will of God. In the Wisdom current the association is all the more immediate because "truth" is equivalent to "wisdom" and wisdom is inseparable from the Law in later Wisdom.

The relationship *ἀλήθεια* (אמת)—*νόμος*, *ἐντολή* (תורה, מצוה) becomes altogether current in the Testament XII and Qumran. In Qumran the "truth" is the Torah as revealed to the Sect<sup>87</sup> and the "truth" to be done (moral sense) is contained

<sup>84</sup> Becker, for instance, rightly points out that the "Geist des Frevels" i.e., *τῆς ἀδικίας* (עוליה) is "nicht auch ohne weiteres der Geist des Irrsins (תעה, πλάνη) ... also der Geist ... der zum Abirren vom rechten Weg verführt". *Op. cit.*, 234.

<sup>85</sup> "So sind *ἀδικία* und *ἀνομία* vielfach synonym" (TWNT I, art. *ἀδικος*, 153, 33f), and Schrenk quotes: Is 33,15; Sir 41,18; together with the variants found in Ps 44,8; Heb 1,9; Ps 88,33; Ps 6,9 comp. Ps 13,4; and so forth. The examples could be multiplied. Especially noteworthy is the correspondence between *ἀδικία* and *עוליה* in the LXX (see above, n. 72); here *ἀδικία* translates *עוליה* some 23×. In the eschatological dualism of Qumran, *עוליה* is the essential characteristic of the opponents of the "truth". Now it is significant that, in the Apocalyptic literature, the period which precedes the final messianic revelation is called the "time of unrighteousness" (*ἀδικία*, Schrenk, *ibid.*, 155, 9ff), usage also found in the NT (*ibid.*, 157, 3ff). 'Αδικία is the state of active opposition to the coming of God's kingdom. On the other hand, *ἀνομία* is used with exactly the same meaning (Test D 5,4-6; Mt 7,23; 13,41; 23,28; 24,12; 2 Thess 2,3,7 and 1 Jn 3,4). On this last point see I. de la Potterie, "Le péché c'est l'iniquité (1 Jn 3,4)", in: *La vie selon l'Esprit* (Paris, 1965), 63-83.

<sup>86</sup> Neh 9,13; Ps 39(40),8.10 (LXX); Ps 118(119),43.86.142; 151,160; Mal 2,6. Although not "canonical", 4 Macc 5,18 could be added. On the association of the "word" (or Law) with "truth" in Ps 119, cf. A. Robert, "Le sens du mot 'Loi' dans le Ps CXIX", *RB* 46 (1937) 182-205.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Betz, *Offenbarung*, 53-60. "Der Begriff אמת meint ... die geoffenbarte Tora ..." (55).

in the commandments, in the Law.<sup>88</sup> In the Test XII ἀλήθεια is used in close parallelism with νόμος (ἐντολή, προστάγματα); the terms are at times practically synonymous.<sup>89</sup>

Given the equivalence ἀλήθεια (אמת)—νόμος (תורה), the reality signified by πλάνη, πλανᾶσθαι, ψεῦδος, ἀδικία (and their Hebrew equivalents) is in direct opposition to the Law. It cannot be otherwise since πλάνη, πλανᾶσθαι (תעה, תעות, תעה, תעות, שקר) and ἀδικία (עויל(ה)) are contraries of ἀλήθεια (אמת)<sup>90</sup> and the "truth" is itself inseparable from the (observance of the) Law.

In the OT it is always Israel (or its "wicked" members) who is the object of "seduction" (πλανᾶσθαι, πλάνη etc.), led astray by the "lies" of false prophets.<sup>91</sup> The πλάνη consists in being led to act contrary to the revealed will of God—i.e., in being led astray from the Covenant Law.<sup>92</sup> In the Wisdom literature πλανᾶσθαι means to be induced to act contrary to the Torah.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>88</sup> The texts which connect אמת with the Law in Qumran are very numerous. If we limit ourselves to 1QS we note that: —"Conversion" is to turn (when the object is specified) to the Law (1QS 5,8: אל תורה מושה; 1QS 5,16: לבל תורה ומשפט; 1QS 5,22: לברית) or to the truth (1QS 6,15: לאמת).

—If the Community is called בית אמת (1QS 4,5,6), יחד אמת (1QS 2,24,26), בית האמת (1QS 5,6), it is because it is the community of the Law (בית התורה—CD 20,10,13). —The role of the Spirit of truth (רוח האמת) is to make the hearts of men fruitful through the commandments of God (1QS 4,2f).

—To do the truth is to do the Law (1QS 1,5; 5,3; 8,2—עשה אמת; 1QS 1,7,16; 5,20,22—what God has commanded, the commandments). "Die Wahrheit die getan werden muss, ist ... nichts anderes als die Weisung der Tora" (Betz, *Offenbarung*, 60).

For further examples in which אמת is associated with the Law, cf. 1,12,15; 5,10; 8,2; 9,17-18. See also below, p. 97, n. 95.

<sup>89</sup> 'Αλήθεια — νόμος: Test R 3,8; Test G 3,1; Test B 10,3 (+ ἐντολαί). 'Αλήθεια — ἐντολαί: Test A 5,4; 6,1; Test B 10,3. 'Αλήθεια — προστάγματα: Test Jud 24,3.

<sup>90</sup> See above, nn. 78 and 80.

<sup>91</sup> The object of πλανᾶν in the LXX is almost invariably Israel (H. Braun, *TWNT* VI, 236, 16ff); only in later texts is the term used of pagans (*ibid.*, 237, 35-39). The significance of this usage lies in the fact that the will of God has been revealed (in the Torah) only to Israel; it is therefore only Israel which can be led astray. See the following note.

<sup>92</sup> This aspect has not been given sufficient attention by Braun (*art. cit.*). If the sin of idolatry is singled out as πλάνη (Dt 4,9; 11,28; 13,5f; 2 K 21,9 (= 2 Chron 33,9); Wisd 11,15; 12,24; 14,22; 15,4; Ez 14,9; etc.), it is because the second commandment (graven image) was a basic element of the Covenant-Law (cf. A. Büchler, *Studies on Sin and Atonement in the Rabbinic Literature of the First Century* (Oxford-London, 1928—r.p. 1967), 4f; 26; 99)—to violate it was to break the Covenant, to cast off the yoke of the Law. To "turn away" (πλανᾶσθαι) from the commandments, the Law, the way of the Lord and to commit the sin of idolatry are equivalent (cf. Dt 11,26-28; 13,1-5; 30,15-17; 2 K 21,9—comp. 21,1-7, etc.). For πλάνη, πλανᾶσθαι = being led astray from the Law, the commandments, the 'ways' of the Lord, of righteousness = not obeying the will of God, see, besides the texts just quoted, Ps 94(95),7.8.10; Is 29,24; 44,8; Hos 9,17; Ez 14,11, and the following note.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. Ps 118,10; Job 6,24; 19,4; Prov 7,25 (l.v.); 13,9; Sir 9,8; and the equivalent



In the Test XII *πλάνη*, *ψεῦδος*—*νόμος*, *ἐντολή* are used as contraries.<sup>94</sup> To be “misled” (*πλανᾶσθαι*) is to be led away from the “truth”, from the Law.

In Qumran the perspective is well defined and elaborated through the doctrine of the two spirits, the opposition between the “Teacher of righteousness” and the “Man of lies”, between the “men, sons, community of truth, of the Law”, and the “men, sons, community of wickedness, the assembly of deceit”. The activity of the “Spirit of wickedness” and of the “Man of lies” is to lead astray (*תעה*) from the correct understanding of the Torah, from the “truth”.<sup>95</sup>

*The Johannine opposition ἀλήθεια—ἀδικία is to be interpreted in the light of the usage found in Qumran, the Testament XII and the Wisdom literature.*

1) The opposition *ἀληθής* (*ἀλήθεια*)—*ἀδικία* is found in the Testament XII and is current in Qumran (*ἀλήθεια* corresponding as it does to *אמת* and *אֲדִיקִיָּא* to *(ה)עול*).

If *ἀδικία* were synonymous with *ψεῦδος* and *πλάνη* in Jn 7,18, so that the opposition between *ἀληθής* and *ἀδικία*, is equal to that between *ἀλήθεια* and *ψεῦδος*, *πλάνη* (*שקר-אמת*, *שוֹי כּוֹב*, *מְרַמֶּה, רְמִיָּה, מְרַמֶּה, תְּעוּת, תְּעוּת*), the affinity between Jn and this literature, where the opposition is current, would be all the more striking.

We have seen that Bultmann holds that *ἀληθής*—*ἀδικία* in Jn 7,18

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expression “from the ways of the Lord”: Job 12,24; Prov 12,26; 21,16; 28,10; Wisd 5,6; 12,24.

<sup>94</sup> *Ψεῦδος* — *νόμος*: Test R 3,5.8; Test D 5,1; 6,8f; *ψεῦδος* — *ἐντολή*: Test D 5,1; Test A 5,3.4. *Πλάνη*, *πλανᾶν* — *νόμος*, *ἐντολή*: Test R 3,7f; Test L 16,1f; Test N 3,2f; Test G 3,1ff; Test A 5,4; 6,1ff; Test Jud 14,8 (= *πλανᾶν* — *παρανομεῖν*); Test Iss 4,6. *Ἀδικία* — *νόμος*: Test D 6,10 (α, β, A, S<sup>1</sup>); Test B 10,3.

<sup>95</sup> The “Man of lies” (*אִישׁ כּוֹב*) has rejected the Law (1QpH 5,11), the words (interpretation) of the “Teacher of righteousness” (1QpH 2,2). The “Prophet of lies” builds a city (community) of lies by seducing (*תעה*) many—by leading them away from the correct interpretation of the Law (1QpH 10,9f)—cf. H. Braun, *Radikalismus*, I, 59, n. 5; vs. H. Bardtke). The activity of the *מְלִיצֵי כּוֹב* (*Lügendeuter*) is also to lead astray from the Law (1QH 2,31; 4,10) and the *אִישׁ הַלְצִין* (*Mann des Spottes*) has watered Israel with the “waters of lie”, i.e., with a false interpretation of the Torah (CD 1,15; cf. also CD 20,12-15). The use of *תעה* in CD is especially interesting, for here the term always designates apostasy from the correct interpretation of the Torah (2,17; 3,1.4.14; 4,1) or the act of inducing to accept a false interpretation (1,15; 2,13; 5,20). The same usage is found in IQS 5,4.11 and 1QH 4,12.25. Although there seems to be no explicit connection between “truth” in the “Geisteslehre” and the Law (Betz, *Offenbarung*, 59) it is the “Spirit of wickedness” who rules over the “Children of wickedness” and determines their “doings” (which are contrary to the Law and “truth”). The same “Spirit” is said to try to lead the “Sons of light” “astray” (*תעה*—1QS 3,21f) and this can only mean: away from the Law.

stands for **אמ-רש**. The reason he gives is insufficient, but other grounds may be adduced in support of his assumption.

i) The context of Jn 7,18, where Jesus is presented as a “teacher” actively engaged in communicating a διδασχή he claims to be “of God”, is definitely in favour of the Jews accusing Jesus of being “untruthful” and a “liar” (**אמ-רש** = *ψεύστης*) rather than “unreliable” and a “sinner” (**אמ-רש** = *οὐ δίκαιος, ἁμαρτωλός*).

ii) At Jn 8,44f *ἀλήθεια* is opposed to *ψεῦδος* (*ψεύστης*). In the devil there is no “truth” (*ἀλήθεια*), he speaks untruth (*τὸ ψεῦδος λαλεῖ*), he is a liar (*ψεύστης*); Jesus speaks the truth (*τὴν ἀλήθειαν λαλεῖ*), he is not a liar (*ψεύστης*—8,55). Thus, to speak the truth (*τὴν ἀλήθειαν*) means not to be *ψεύστης*—to be *ἀληθής*.

iii) At Jn 7,12.47 the Jews (Pharisees) accuse Jesus of being the author of *πλάνη*, which is opposed to the Law (*ἀλήθεια*—see below).

2) *Ἀληθής ἐστιν καὶ ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν*, we have seen, replaces *ἀφ’ ἑαυτοῦ οὐ λαλεῖ* in v. 18. This correspondence is particularly important because it shows that to say Jesus is *ἀληθής* means to say that he does not speak of himself, that he speaks (*λαλεῖ*) what he has seen (heard) with, been taught (told) by the Father—the “words” of God. Jn can express this by writing that Jesus speaks the “truth” (*τὴν ἀλήθειαν λαλεῖν, λέγειν*). *Ἀληθής ἐστιν* and *τὴν ἀλήθειαν λαλεῖν* are thus synonymous expressions. Now the studies of de la Potterie have shown that the Johannine notion of *ἀλήθεια* derives precisely from the Jewish Wisdom and Apocalyptic literature.<sup>96</sup> It is only logical to suppose that the opposition *ἀληθής ἐστιν* (= *τὴν ἀλήθειαν λαλεῖ*)—*ἀδικία* should also derive from this literature.

3) The opposition *ἀλήθεια*—*ψεῦδος*, in the Jewish Apocalyptic, is found in a dualistic context. *Ψεῦδος, πλάνη, ἀδικία* are traced back to the devil,<sup>97</sup> *ἀλήθεια* to God (and his angels, “spirit”). In Jn 8 where, as at Jn 7,18, we have the opposition *ἀλήθεια*—*ψεῦδος*, the context is also dualistic. Furthermore, *ψεῦδος* is traced back to the

<sup>96</sup> I. de la Potterie, *Alētheia. La notion johannique et ses antécédents historiques*, Diss. Pont. Inst. Biblici (Rome, 1965).

<sup>97</sup> Even in the later texts of the LXX, where the devil is mentioned (Wisd 2,24), no nexus is established between the devil and *πλάνη, πλανᾶσθαι, ψεῦδος* (cf. H. Braun, *TWNT* VI, 237, 43ff). On the contrary, in the Apocalyptic writings (eth Hen, Test XII, Jub, Qumran) as well as in the Mandaic and Hermetic writings they have their origin in the devil and evil spirits. *Ibid.*, 239-241.

devil, the "truth" is traced back to God (Jesus). Jesus is ἐκ τῶν ἄνω, the Jews are ἐκ τῶν κάτω (8,23). Jesus is not ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, the Jews are ἐκ τούτου τοῦ κόσμου. Jesus is "of God" (8,42), the Jews are not "of God" (8,47). The Jews are called ψεύσται by Jesus (8,55) and Jesus says he is not ὅμοιος αὐτοῖς—i.e., he is ἀληθής. Elsewhere Jn will say that he is πλήρης ... ἀληθείας (1,14), that he is the "truth" (14,6). The Jews are not only liars, they are the enemies of the ἀλήθεια, they cannot hear the word (τὸν λόγον) nor come to know (understand) Jesus' language (τὴν λαλίαν αὐτοῦ), they try to kill him because he speaks the truth (ἄνθρωπος ὃς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ... λελάληκα 8,40). Jesus speaks the truth because he says what he has seen (heard) with the Father (8,38.40)—basically it is because he is "of God" etc., that he speaks the truth. The Jews cannot hear the truth because they are "of this world"—they do what they have heard from their father, the devil. In the devil there is no truth (ἀλήθεια), he speaks untruth (τὸ ψεῦδος λαλεῖ), is a liar (ψεῦστης) and the father of lies (ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ). The Jews are murderers and liars because they are "of the devil".

4) The last analogy is of particular interest to us: as in the Wisdom and Apocalyptic literature and in Qumran, ψεῦδος and πλάνη stand in a certain opposition to the Law in Jn also (see below).

We are therefore of the opinion that the Johannine opposition ἀληθής—ἀδικία at 7,18 (= ἀλήθεια—ψεῦδος, תמא-רפח) is to be interpreted in the light of the dualistic usage of these terms found in Qumran, the Testament XII and the Wisdom literature, rather than in the light of Hellenistic-Gnostic dualism.<sup>98</sup> This means not only that ἀληθής designates Jesus as the Revealer (which is admitted even by Bultmann),<sup>99</sup> but that the opposition ἀλήθεια—ψεῦδος is not

<sup>98</sup> This background is proposed by Bultmann, Dodd and H. Braun. Braun associates the Jewish apocalyptic with the Hellenistic mystical literature (*TWNT* VI, 238ff) and speaks of Gnostic usage (*ibid.*, 241, 12) which would be behind πλάνη—ἀλήθεια (cf. 241, 16ff). In his major work, this author also underlines the Gnostic tendencies he notices in Qumran (*Radikalismus*, I, 18-24). A number of authors are not of this opinion (cf. J. Maier, *Die Texte vom toten Meer* (München-Basel, 1960), II, 18f, who gives a list and bibliography) and believe that the whole question of Gnostic dualism has to be re-examined as a result of the Qumran discoveries (so K. G. Kuhn, *RGK* V, art. "Qumran", 754). A major contribution in this direction has come from Becker (*op. cit.*) and de la Potterie (*op. cit.*).

<sup>99</sup> Cf. *TWNT* I, art. ἀληθής, 249, 24-27. Bultmann admits that ἀληθής at Jn 7,18 means that Jesus is the "Offenbarer", but for him this means that he reveals the "Wirklichkeit Gottes".

that of *Wirklichkeit* vs. *Schein*.<sup>100</sup> To say that Jesus is ἀληθής and that there is no ἀδικία in him means to say that the διδαχή Jesus speaks is the revelation of the divine mystery (ἡ ἀλήθεια): that he is the Son of God sent by the Father to give life to the world.

It is therefore apparent that, at Jn 7,14-18, it is the whole "mission" of Jesus which is being questioned by the Jews. The "revelation" Jesus brings is considered by the Jews as not being revelation at all; Jesus is accused of being ψεύστης, a πλάνος whose doctrine is "unorthodox", at variance with the revelation of God (ἡ διδαχή τοῦ θεοῦ) contained in the Law, as interpreted by orthodox Judaism. It is because the Jews do not value the teaching of Jesus for what it is (revelation) that they consider him a false prophet, in league with the devil, who leads the people astray, away from the Law and orthodoxy. The moment in which Jesus' teaching is perceived as revelation (i.e., διδαχή τοῦ θεοῦ), it cannot be opposed to the Law, which is also given by God. That this is the purport of Jn 7,14-18 will become clear when we examine Jn 7,17 and Jn 7,19,<sup>101</sup> where the relationship of the Law to the διδαχή Jesus proclaims is given by the parallelism between ποιεῖν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ and τὸν νόμον ποιεῖν. We will dwell upon the manner in which belief in Jesus is the fulfilment of the divine will, the "doing" of the Law, in the Second Part.<sup>102</sup> For the moment, let it suffice to say that, if τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν is the condition for recognizing the origin and revelatory nature of Jesus' teaching and, ultimately, for recognizing the origin and identity of Jesus himself (that he is ἀληθής, ἡ ἀλήθεια); if, on the other hand, the two expressions τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν and τὸν νόμον ποιεῖν are correlated, then the "doing of the Law" is itself associated with the ἀλήθεια. Since Jesus gives no interpretation of the Law in the Rabbinical sense, since his teaching ("truth") is not the revelation of the hidden meaning of the Torah, as it is in Qumran, the relationship of his διδάσκειν (λαλεῖν) to the Law will resolve itself in the broader question of the relationship of Jesus himself to the Law. We will see that, although ἡ ἀλήθεια, in the

<sup>100</sup> Rightly Becker, *Heil Gottes*, 231-232. However, it is not sufficient to say that ἀληθής ἐστιν means that Jesus belongs to the "Heilspähre Gottes ... im Gegensatz zur Sünde". It means further that Jesus, being the Son of God (= "from above", "of God", etc.), is the Revealer—that the mystery of God is revealed in his person.

<sup>101</sup> See pp. 130ff.

<sup>102</sup> See pp. 377-379; 389-397.

Johannine view, is not to be found in the Law but in Jesus, the Law should lead to the recognition that Jesus is the ἀληθεια. The accusations voiced in a veiled manner at Jn 7,14-18 are clearly expressed at Jn 7, 45-49 and Jn 9,24-34.

C) *Jn 7,45-49 and Jn 9,24-34*

The two texts present striking analogies.

- 1) The *dramatis personae* are the same : at Jn 9,24-34 the Pharisees, who claim to be disciples of Moses, and the man born blind, an עִוְם הָאָרֶץ born in sin; at 7,45-49 the ἀρχοντες and the Pharisees, learned in the Law, and the ὄχλος which ignores the Law, with which the ὑπηρέται are associated.
- 2) At Jn 9,24-34 the Pharisees take pride in being disciples of Moses; at Jn 7,45-49 they vaunt their knowledge of the Law.
- 3) At Jn 9,24-34 it is the fact of being faithful disciples of Moses, who know that God spoke to their "teacher", which does not allow them to accept Jesus and his teaching; at Jn 7,45-49 it is the knowledge of the Law which has not allowed them to succumb to Jesus' πλάνη.
- 4) At Jn 9,24-34 the Pharisees treat the beggar as an inferior—he is an עִוְם הָאָרֶץ, born in sin, who should not presume to "teach" them; at Jn 7,45-49 they revile the servants and curse the "crowd", ignorant of the Law. If the blind man has become a disciple of Jesus, it is because he is an עִוְם הָאָרֶץ; the crowd has believed on Jesus because they are likewise "ignorant" of the Law.

In both cases we are dealing with a *Rechts-Streit* with deep theological implications. Moses (and his teaching—the Law) is being opposed to Jesus (and his teaching—his "word"); the confrontation is between the disciples of Moses and the disciples of Jesus. The issue at stake is : is the teaching of Jesus (his revelation) opposed to the Law?

a) *Jn 7,45-49*

The episode reported in these verses has the same setting as Jn 7, 14-18. Jesus is teaching in the Temple during the Feast of the Tabernacles. Servants are sent out by the High Priests and Pharisees to arrest him (7,32), but they return to the Pharisees empty-handed. Asked why they have not arrested him, the servants answer :

οὐδέποτε ἐλάλησεν οὕτως ἄνθρωπος.<sup>103</sup> The quasi-technical sense λαλεῖν has in Jn <sup>104</sup> cautions against interpreting the words of the servants as if they were merely paying tribute to Jesus' oratorical skill or even as if they had been disarmed by its power.<sup>105</sup> The λαλεῖν of v. 46 refers back (as does the λαλεῖν of v. 26) to the "teaching" Jesus is giving in the Temple, which has been characterized as διδαχὴ τοῦ θεοῦ = ἀφ' ἐαυτοῦ οὐ λαλεῖν = ἀληθὲς εἶναι = τὴν ἀλήθειαν λαλεῖν (cf. above). By saying *no man* has ever spoken (ἐλάλησεν) like this, the servants (Jn) are stressing the revelatory nature of Jesus' word.

The μὴ καὶ ὑμεῖς πεπλάνησθε, which presupposes a negative answer,<sup>106</sup> should not be given excessive weight.<sup>107</sup> It is natural that the Pharisees should refuse to believe that their own servants have been "led astray" by Jesus.<sup>108</sup> More important is the fact that the reaction of the servants to Jesus' λαλεῖν is used by the evangelist to introduce the thought that "hearing" Jesus' διδαχὴ means to be "led astray" by him, which thought will be developed in the following verses.

What is clear is that the servants are assimilated in some way to the "crowd", ignorant of the Law, which has been seduced and has believed on Jesus and that the objection of Nicodemus ("Does our Law condemn a man without *having heard* ...?" 7,51) invites us to give the answer of the servants a deeper meaning.<sup>109</sup> In some way

<sup>103</sup> The reading is uncertain. The longer lesson, which adds: ὡς οὗτος λαλεῖ (ὁ ἄνθρωπος)—P<sup>66</sup>, N\*, D, etc.,—does not alter the meaning.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. J. Dupont, *Gnosis. La connaissance religieuse dans les épîtres de Saint Paul* (Paris, 1960), 220-230 (LXX); de la Potterie, *Alētheia*, 8-11; see also below, pp. 200ff.

<sup>105</sup> H. J. Holtzmann (*Evangelium des Johannes*, Hand-Comm. zum NT (Freiburg i. Br., 1908), ad loc.) and Schanz (ad loc.) speak of the effect of Jesus' eloquence. Such "psychological" considerations are foreign to Jn (cf. Bultmann, ad loc.). Some commentators speak of the "authority" or "power" of Jesus' teaching (Hoskyns, Bernard, Barrett, Brown). The perspective of Mt 7,29 is hardly that of Jn. Jesus is not compared with other teachers as "one having authority"; he is the only teacher!

<sup>106</sup> Cf. 6,67; 7,52; 9,40; 18,17.25; 21,5.

<sup>107</sup> Vs. Loisy (530): "Vous aussi, seriez-vous séduits? La chose serait incroyable: et si les pharisiens se refusent à le penser, l'évangéliste ne le dit pas non plus" (I underline).

<sup>108</sup> Rightly Lagrange (ad loc.): "ils ne veulent pas croire qu'ils seraient déjà séduits (μῆ)" (I underline).

<sup>109</sup> Thomas (ad loc.) speaks of their conversion: "ad pauca verba Christi capti sunt" ... "laudabiliter seducti erant qui, dimisso malo infidelitatis, ad veritatem fidei sunt adducti". Lagrange, Bernard, Hoskyns move in the same direction, but are more circumspect.

the servants have done what the "crowd ignorant of the Law" has done and what the Pharisees refuse to do (v. 51): they have "heard" Jesus, they have perceived that Jesus' word is unique and without parallel (Bernard), they have been infected by this teaching (Hoskyns); they consequently refuse to have a hand in the hostile undertaking of the Pharisees.<sup>110</sup> To adopt such a receptive attitude towards Jesus' λαλεῖν (διδάσκειν) is, for the Pharisees, tantamount to being led astray (πλανᾶσθαι).

The meaning the Pharisees attribute to πεπλάνησθε is given unequivocal expression: it is to believe on Jesus (πιστεύειν εἰς αὐτόν). There is a strict correspondence between accepting (hearing) Jesus' teaching (λαλεῖν, διδάσκειν), believing on him (πιστεύειν εἰς αὐτόν) and being led astray (πλανᾶσθαι). What is more: this is the fate of those who do not know the Law. Not one of the Pharisees or of the leaders has been led astray by Jesus (believed on Jesus, "heard" his λαλεῖν—διδάσκειν).

The expression ὁ ὄχλος οὗτος ὁ μὴ γινώσκων τὸν νόμον is commonly regarded<sup>111</sup> as an equivalent designation for the Rabbinical technical term עַם הָאָרֶץ, and with good reason. The term 1) is used by the Pharisees 2) in a contemptuous sense. What characterizes this group of people is 3) their ignorance of the Law and 4) they are accursed.

1) The words are spoken by the Pharisees whose very name probably gave expression to their separation from the *vulgus*,<sup>112</sup> the ignorant and negligent mass of people who did not study the Torah or follow its requirements scrupulously.

2) The separation and open hostility between the strict observers of the Law and the עַם הָאָרֶץ began to set in the first century with the formation of the חבורות.<sup>113</sup> The contempt and hatred with which the חברים regarded the עַם הָאָרֶץ reached unbelievable heights<sup>114</sup>—social

<sup>110</sup> The opinion of Loisy (529), according to which we are not in the presence of an explanation for "l'inexécution des ordres" and that the servants say what they say because "après tout, ils sont obligés de dire quelque chose", cannot be held. Jn's interest is theological: hostility towards Jesus is possible only if one refuses to "hear" him. The servants of the Pharisees are more enlightened than their masters!

<sup>111</sup> So most of the commentators (Lagrance, Bultmann, Barrett, Hoskyns, Bernard, etc.).

<sup>112</sup> Cf. Moore, *Judaism*, I, 60f.

<sup>113</sup> Moore, *op. cit.*, II, 73; 159ff; *Str.-Bill.*, II, 500-509..

<sup>114</sup> *Str.-Bill.*, II, 509-517; Moore, *Judaism.*, II, 159ff.

intercourse with them was shunned and marriage with one of their number was considered a disgrace.

3) What distinguished an **עם הארץ** from a "pious" Jew or a Pharisee was basically ignorance of the Law.<sup>115</sup> Ignorance of the Law and the keeping of the Law were, in all of later Judaism, intimately connected and lax behaviour was seen as the result of ignorance (culpable ignorance) of the Law.<sup>116</sup> With the formation of the "schools" and the opportunity thereby afforded of instructing oneself in the Law, those who remained ignorant (and behaved accordingly) were regarded by the Pharisees as no better than the pagans and were also called **עם הארץ**.<sup>117</sup>

4) Because they despised the Law and did not follow it the **עם הארץ** fell under the curse of the Law (Dt 27,26);<sup>118</sup> they were a "massa perditionis", like the pagans.

There seems to be no doubt that Jn is using the terminology which will become current in Rabbinism, where **עם הארץ** is a technical term for people who are not instructed in the Law and where the opposition Perushim—**עם הארץ** becomes current.<sup>119</sup>

The Law (viz., knowledge of the Law, faithfulness to the Law) and belief on Jesus (accepting his *λαλεῖν, διδάσκειν*) are, for the Pharisees, mutually exclusive. Expressed negatively: falling victim to Jesus' teaching is due to ignorance of the Law; expressed positively: knowledge of the Law prevents one from falling victim to Jesus' teaching—*his teaching is πλάνη*.

<sup>115</sup> *Str.-Bill.*, II, 495, a,b; Moore, *Judaism*, I, 321.

<sup>116</sup> In Judaism "knowing the Law" and "doing the Law" were sometimes distinguished. In some writings the "doing" of the Law was given primacy over "knowing the Law" (v.g., Abot; cf. Braun, *Radikalismus*, I, 4). In Qumran knowledge of the Torah assumes greater importance (Braun, *ibid.*, 16-24; 90-93) even though the "doing" of the Law is of paramount importance (*ibid.*, 24-26; 99-101). In the Rabbinical writings, knowledge of the Law leads necessarily to its observance (*Str.-Bill.*, II, 496f). Under Akiba the study of the Law is given primacy over the doing (Rengstorff, *TWNT* IV, 405, 10ff) of the Law (S Dt 41, on 11,13; b Qid 40b). Especially instructive is Abot 2,8, where the primitive reading **אם עשית תורה** was changed to **אם למדת תורה**. This would explain the standpoint adopted by the Pharisees at Jn 7,49; although it is natural that Jn should have them emphasize "knowledge" of the Law, given the context (the Law is being contrasted with the "teaching" of Jesus). At any rate, knowledge and observance of the Law are inseparable.

<sup>117</sup> Moore, *Judaism*, I, 321.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. further Dt 28,15ff; Ps 118(119),21 and comp. Wisd 3,12; 14,8.

<sup>119</sup> Moore, *Judaism*, I, 60.



The reasoning is put *on the lips of the Pharisees* by Jn: Jesus is being accused of leading people astray from the orthodox Judaism the Pharisees represent. They are passing judgement upon Jesus based on their (mis)understanding of the Law (and on their misunderstanding of Jesus). There is much irony in the statement Jn has the Pharisees make in vv. 47-49. The reader knows that Jesus speaks the "truth"—it is the Jews and the Pharisees who are deceived and led astray (by their father, the devil), it is they who do not know and do not understand the Law, who violate the Law by condemning Jesus. Ironically, it is Nicodemus, one of their number, who draws the reader's attention to this fact (7,51; comp. 7,19).

Jn 7,45-49 reflects the confrontation between the Church and the Synagogue. The accusation of the Pharisees is that moved against Jesus and his followers in Jewish circles, accusation which is mentioned not only in the Rabbinical writings,<sup>120</sup> but in early Christian literature<sup>121</sup> and in the NT itself.<sup>122</sup> Judaism applied the "topos" of the Pseudo-Messiah, current in later Judaism,<sup>123</sup> to Jesus: he was a *πλάνος*.<sup>124</sup> As for his followers, they were recruited among the "ignorant"; not one of those who were well versed in the Law accepted him as the Messiah.<sup>125</sup>

#### b) Jn 9,24-34

In dealing with the Sabbath question in Jn 9 we saw how many particulars found in this chapter indicate that the whole episode has been coloured by an outlook belonging to the time of the Church.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>120</sup> b Sanh 43<sup>a</sup>; 107<sup>b</sup>; Sota 47<sup>a</sup>. See also *Str.-Bill.*, I, 1023.

<sup>121</sup> Especially worthy of notice is the Christian interpolation found in Test L 16,3: *ἄνδρα καινοποιοῦντα νόμον ... πλάνον προσαγορεύετε*. In Justin's *Dialogue*, Jesus is called *λαοπλάνος* (69,7) and *πλάνος* (108).

<sup>122</sup> See Mt 27,63f, where the Jews call Jesus *ἐκεῖνος ὁ πλάνος* and express the fear that his disciples will say he rose from the dead *καὶ ἔσται ἡ ἐσχάτη πλάνη χείρων τῆς πρώτης*; i.e., Jesus' whole ministry was *ἡ πρώτη πλάνη*. In Jn the accusation is made at 7,12 and is behind 12,19. The accusation that the disciples of Jesus are *πλάνοι*, like their master, is behind 2 Cor 6,8; 1 Thess 2,3; 2 Tim 3,13.

<sup>123</sup> H. Braun, *TWNT* VI, 242, 11-40.

<sup>124</sup> The results of our investigation on the "teaching" of Jesus are in substantial agreement with the views of W. A. Meeks, (*The Prophet-King. Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology*, Suppl. NovT, XIV (Leiden, 1967), 47-59), although pursued along different lines.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. Origen, *Contra Celsum*, I, 62; II, 9.

<sup>126</sup> See above, pp. 24-26.

Thus, although it is only in vv. 35ff that the man who recovered his sight makes a profession of faith, he is already presented as a μαθητής of Jesus in v. 28.<sup>127</sup> His affirmation that Jesus is παρὰ θεοῦ is equivalent to a confession of faith, given the deeper meaning Jn gives to this expression.<sup>128</sup>

The point which is of immediate concern to us here is the opposition between the μαθητής of Jesus and the μαθηταὶ τοῦ Μωϋσέως. We have already seen how למד (διδάσκειν) in the Jewish tradition is bound to the Law.<sup>129</sup> "To teach" and "to learn" are but inverse aspects of a unique reality and the Hebrew uses the same root to indicate the activity of the one who teaches (למד) and the subject who learns (תלמיד). The correspondence is interesting because both in Jn 7,14-18 and Jn 9,24-34 διδάσκειν (διδάχῃ) and μαθάνειν (μαθητής) are used together. The Jews question Jesus' doctrine, teaching (διδάχῃ—Jn 7,14) because he does not belong to the Rabbinic tradition (μὴ μεμαθηκώς—Jn 7,15); the Pharisees ask how a μαθητής of an unrecognized teacher (Jn 9,28f) can presume to teach (διδάσκειν) them (Jn 9,34).

It is only by casting a brief look at the Rabbinic conception<sup>130</sup> of "teacher"

<sup>127</sup> This, in turn, is equivalent to "confessing Jesus as the Christ"—9,22 (which is what the man does when he says that Jesus is παρὰ θεοῦ), hence he is cast out of the Synagogue. There is no inconsistency between 9,22 and 9,34 (vs. Dodd, *Interpretation*, 81, n. 3).

<sup>128</sup> See above, pp. 24-28.

<sup>129</sup> See above, pp. 77-79.

<sup>130</sup> Qumran is of little assistance for understanding Jn 9, 24-34. In these writings neither the word תלמיד (1QH 2,17 should read תלמדנו) nor the word רב (= teacher) are to be found. "Teaching" no doubt has an important role in the life of the Sect (cf. יורה, מורה, יורה, למד) and, as in "orthodox" Judaism, is at the service of the Torah, but the "Traditionsprinzip" and the "teacher-disciple relationship" are not quite the same as those found in Rabbinism (and in Jn 9,24-34). As in "orthodox" Judaism, the Torah dominates all teaching. The task of the "Teacher of righteousness" and his helpers is to explain the Torah. This is considered a repetition of what Moses himself and his helpers did. Moses (who, with Ezra, was an interpreter of the Torah and a "teacher"—1Q 22,1.3) is the model of the "Teacher of righteousness" (Betz, *Offenbarung*, 27-35) and "der Lehrer der Gerechtigkeit nimmt das Lehramt Moses und Esras wieder auf" (*ibid.*, 43). The "Teacher" occupies a subordinate rank with respect to Moses, but he is not a תלמיד of a school or of a chain of tradition which goes back to Moses. His teaching is not received from tradition in the same way as that of a Rabbi—it is "revealed" to him. The continuity with and subordination to Moses is guaranteed by the fact that God does not speak "face to face" with the

(רב-מורה) and "disciple" (תלמיד) that one can understand what is really at stake at Jn 9,27-34.

The word תלמיד is current in the Rabbinical writings and, as the absence of the terms תלמיד—μαθητής in the MT and LXX indicates,<sup>131</sup> represents a conception which is foreign to the OT.<sup>132</sup> The relationship teacher-disciple and the "Traditionsprinzip", which are so conspicuously absent in the OT, are very much present in the Rabbinical writings.<sup>133</sup> Here, the term תלמיד is the exclusive designation for one who occupies himself with Scripture and the religious traditions of Judaism,<sup>134</sup> just as למד, as a rule, means to occupy oneself with the Torah.<sup>135</sup> The body of tradition which the תלמיד "learns", he receives through the master (רב) who, in turn, received it as a "disciple" (תלמיד) from his teacher. One must belong to a group of disciples of an authorized teacher (who, in turn, belonged to a group of disciples of another such teacher); to be a תלמיד<sup>136</sup> (and to become a רב), for the תלמיד is nothing but the bearer (one who receives and transmits) of a tradition his master has himself received and transmits—he is but a link in a chain of tradition constituted by consecutive generations of teacher-disciples. Teachers have a prominent place in this chain of tradition, but *the tradition itself is dominated by the Law*. Furthermore, given the "Traditionsprinzip",<sup>137</sup> whereby the disciples of a "school" felt themselves bound to respect the doctrine (the views and intentions) of the founder of the school to which they belonged by faithfully preserving and transmitting his words, the tradition—dominated by the Torah—is traced back to Moses.<sup>138</sup> He is the source of this tradition and is considered *the* teacher with whom all other teachers must be in agreement. A number of Rabbinic texts speak of the desert generation, Josuah, the prophets (in opposition to the OT view!), Eliseus and Eliah as תלמידים of Moses.<sup>139</sup> It

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"Teacher", as he did to Moses (*ibid.*, 67f) and that the "revelation" granted to the "Teacher" by the Spirit of God is itself inseparable from the Torah (*ibid.*, 110-142; esp. 118f and 135-142).

<sup>131</sup> רב with the meaning "teacher" is not found in the OT; it becomes current in Rabbinism (Lohse, *TWNT* VI, 963). The same may be said of תלמיד (OT only at 1 Chron 25,8). In the LXX μαθητής is only found as a variant at Jer 13,21; 20,11; 26,9; διδάσκαλος at Est 1,6; 2 Macc 1,10.

<sup>132</sup> Cf. Rengstorf, *TWNT* IV, 429-434.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 434-440.

<sup>134</sup> למד "meint ... ausschliesslich den, der sich (als Lernender) mit der Schrift und der religiösen Überlieferung des Judentums beschäftigt". *Ibid.*, 434, 18-20.

<sup>135</sup> "למד schlechthin meint in der Regel die Beschäftigung mit der Thora". *Ibid.*, 403, 30f. The Rabbinical usage is in continuity with that of the OT (*ibid.*, 402, 35ff).

<sup>136</sup> "Es gibt keinen תלמיד ohne Lehrer (רב). Wer keinen Lehrer hat, ist kein תלמיד, mag er auch noch so eifrig studieren". *Ibid.*, 437, 2f. A non-Jew who has a scholarly knowledge of the Torah is never called a תלמיד חכם or even a תלמיד.

<sup>137</sup> On the "Traditionsprinzip", cf. Rengstorf, *ibid.*, 426, 15ff. This author maintains that the disciple-teacher relationship found in the Rabbinical writings is derived from Hellenism. *Ibid.*, 440-442.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 439, 28ff.

<sup>139</sup> For Josuah and the desert generation as תלמידים of Moses, cf. Abot 1,1;

is not excluded that תלמידים של משה was a "Selbstbezeichnung" used by Pharisaical Rabbinism.<sup>140</sup> The "chair" upon which the Rabbis sat in the School-room was called קטדרא דמשה—the one who sat upon it taught with the authority of Moses, set forth his teaching (cf. Mt 23,2).<sup>141</sup> The position of unparalleled prominence granted to Moses is to be attributed to his having been the beneficiary of the divine revelation to Israel which took place on Mount Sinai; God spoke to him face to face and he was the mediator of the Covenant-Law.<sup>142</sup>

When the Pharisees at Jn 9,29 say : οἶδαμεν ὅτι Μωϋσεὶ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός and oppose Moses to Jesus, they mean to say that it is certain that God revealed his word and will to Moses and that they are secure in the knowledge that they belong to the tradition which goes back to him—as for Jesus they know not whence he comes. We have already spoken<sup>143</sup> about the role the knowledge of Jesus' origin plays in chapters 7-9 and seen that the discovery of his origin comes about by believing on him. It is consequently not surprising that Jn should pass from the knowledge that God spoke to Moses to the lack of knowledge concerning the origin of Jesus. The logical sequence would have been : "We know that God spoke to Moses but we do not know whether God spoke to this man". But, for Jn, it is because Jesus is "of God", the Son of God, that he speaks the words of God; *his* word is the word *of God*. This places him well above Moses. The revelation he brings is not, as in the case of Moses, something foreign to his person. He *is* the revelation of God because he is the Son of God.

The analogy between Jn 9,28f and Jn 7,14f is enlightening. It shows that the authenticity of Jesus' teaching rests on the sole foundation of his personal authority and, more fundamentally, on his (claim to) being Son of God.<sup>144</sup> At 7,14f Jesus' teaching is viewed with suspicion because he is not the תלמיד of a recognized Rabbi;

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Dt R 11,10 (on 31,14). Moses is called רבינו in Mek Ex 4 רסע בשלח (on 16,22) and S Dt 31,14. S Dt 26 (on 3,23) considers Moses and David the teaching pillars. Eliseus is a disciple of Elias, who is a disciple of Moses (Tos Sota 4,7) and the prophets are also תלמידים of Moses (Abot 1,1; S Dt 34 (on 6,7)).

<sup>140</sup> So Rengstorf (*TWNT* IV, 440, 4ff). The expression תלמידים של משה is found in b Joma 4a (cf. *Str.-Bill.*, II, 535, ad Jn 9,28).

<sup>141</sup> Cf. *Str.-Bill.*, I, 909, ad 23,2.

<sup>142</sup> See the section on Jn 5,41-47, pp. 231ff.

<sup>143</sup> See above, pp. 26-28 and below, pp. 266-271.

<sup>144</sup> It is this point which marks off the "teaching" of Jesus from that of the Rabbis (see above) and distinguishes his relationship as διδάσκαλος to his μαθηταί clearly from that found in Hellenism and Judaism (on this last point : Rengstorf, *TWNT* IV, 448-460; esp. 458, 5-11 and 459, 28-34).

Jesus replies that he received his διδασχὴ from God (was taught by him—Jn 8,28). At 9,28f the Pharisees know Moses received his διδασχὴ from God, they do not believe Jesus did (the contrast is no longer between Jesus and the Rabbis, but between Jesus and *the* Rabbi).

The indignant answer of the Pharisees (9,28) to the question of the man born blind (v. 27b) is important in another respect. In virtue of the "Traditionsprinzip", the μαθηταί of Jesus, like their master, have deviated from orthodox doctrine. To be a disciple of Moses is considered incompatible with becoming a disciple of Jesus. The view of Jn, on the contrary, is that, if one is a true μαθητής of Moses, one *should become a μαθητής of Jesus*.

Bultmann goes too far in affirming that the blind man, as contrasted with the Pharisees, is presented as a true disciple of Moses.<sup>145</sup> At Jn 9,24-34 the μαθηταί of Jesus and the μαθηταί of Moses constitute two opposed groups and one has the impression that the expression μαθηταὶ τοῦ Μωϋσέως is a self-designation used by orthodox Judaism, by those who *refuse* to become disciples of Jesus. It is highly unlikely that Christians would attribute to themselves the "title" of their adversaries and call themselves "disciples of Moses". Their διδάσκαλος is not a μαθητής of Moses.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Comm., 256. Bultmann reads too much into the οἶδαμεν of v. 31: "in dem sich der Geheilte in dem οἶδαμεν mit den Juden zusammenfasst, zeigt er, dass auch er ein Mose-Jünger ist, und gerade ein echter!" The οἶδαμεν of v. 31 should not be interpreted as if the disciple of Jesus were associating himself with the Pharisees; it rather indicates the opposition Church—Synagogue: "the use of the 1st person plural does not imply that all men alike know ... nor merely that we Jews know, but that Christians more than all others know ..." (Hoskyns, ad loc.; see his remarks concerning the use of "we" in the Johannine writings, 86-95).

<sup>146</sup> It is possible that Jn wishes to draw a parallel between Jesus and Moses. Moses was "taught" directly by God. In the OT God "speaks" to Moses what he is to "teach" Israel—the Law in particular (cf. Dt 4,1-5.10.14; 5,31(28); 6,1; 11,18-19; 31,19.22; Num 12,2.8). Berak 63<sup>b</sup> reads: "They will say: the teacher (God) is angry, and the disciple (Moses) is angry; what will become of Israel?" There is also a certain parallelism with the prophets who, in the OT, are said to be taught directly by God, their "master" (TWNT IV, 434, 5ff). Jn makes clear that Jesus is likewise taught directly by God (7,16ff; 8,28, etc.), he does not receive his teaching from tradition. There is a certain analogy with the conception of the "Teacher of righteousness", but Jn differs radically from Qumran when he subordinates Moses to Jesus (cf. Jn 5,45ff). It is the Law which is spoken (taught) by God to Moses (and by Moses to Israel). The "truth" (ἀλήθεια) is heard only by Jesus and revealed only by him (cf. 1,14.17). The "teaching" of Jesus is not that of Moses nor is it at the service of the Law. On the contrary, the Law is only there to lead men to accept the fulness of revelation given

He receives his διδαχή directly from God and what he "teaches" goes beyond anything taught by Moses. However, the remark of Bultmann has a part of truth: being μαθηταὶ τοῦ Μωϋσέως for Jn does not have the same meaning it has for the Pharisees. Moses bore witness to Jesus—his followers should come to Jesus if they have truly understood their master (cf. Jn 5,45ff).<sup>147</sup> This is what the Jewish-Christians have done. They are not apostates, on the contrary: *they* (not the Pharisee) *were* (in a certain sense: *are*) the true disciples of Moses.<sup>148</sup> This is obviously not the view of the Pharisees. The μαθητής of Jesus is "cast out" of the Synagogue.

Some exegetes<sup>149</sup> are of the opinion that ἐξέβαλον αὐτόν ἔξω only means that they chased him from their presence; others<sup>150</sup> believe that Jn has excommunication in mind. Jn 9,22; 12,42 and 16,2 favour the latter view.<sup>151</sup> The man is treated in much the same way as the "crowd" at Jn 7,49. There the Pharisees "curse" <sup>עם הארץ</sup> the "crowd", in our text they "banish" the man born steeped in sin. Zimmerli<sup>153</sup> has shown that banishment formulas and formulas of malediction<sup>154</sup> are very close, so that it is practically the same whether one falls under "curse" or "ban". Jn 7,49 and 9,34 express the same idea: those who have believed on Jesus do not belong to the Jewish fold any longer, they have been cut off from the community of the Law.

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by Jesus, which the Law could not give. The separation is so clear that Jn refuses to present Jesus as the bringer of a new Law (vs. J. L. McKenzie, *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. "Teach", cf. what is said below concerning the "legal terms" ἐντολή, λόγος).

<sup>147</sup> See below, pp. 254-263.

<sup>148</sup> The affirmation is possible only if μαθηταὶ τοῦ Μωϋσέως is given a double meaning. This is not impossible (we have only to think of Jn's use of the term "Jews" or νόμος: the Jews are the enemies, of Jesus, they are also those who believe on him; the Law, as the patrimony of "orthodox" Judaism, is "their" Law and *as such* is opposed to Jesus, as understood by Christians it testifies to him and is fulfilled by him). We must insist, however, that the "true" disciples of Moses have become disciples of Jesus and thereby ceased to be "disciples of Moses" in the sense in which the Pharisees are disciples of Moses.

<sup>149</sup> Schanz, Lagrange (the excommunication followed), Bernard, Westcott, Brown.

<sup>150</sup> Loisy (600), Lightfoot (203, n. ad loc.), Hoskyns, Barrett ("presumably"); Bultmann (*Ergänzungsheft*, 35—on p. 256) gives ἐξέβαλον a double sense—which is altogether likely.

<sup>151</sup> See above, pp. 24ff. and below, pp. 241ff.

<sup>152</sup> The ἐπάρατοί εἰσιν has imperative force. Cf. Bultmann (234, n. 5), quoting Merx, ad loc.

<sup>153</sup> *Art. cit.*

<sup>154</sup> On the אָרֶר formulas, see Scharbert, *art. cit.*

Jn does not fail to illustrate at 9,24-34 (as he does at 7,45-51) that it is the Pharisees, and not the **עם הארץ** who has believed on Jesus, who are "misled". The statement of the man born blind (9,31-33) shows that the Pharisees are disregarding a recognized principle of Rabbinic theology, based on the Torah,<sup>155</sup> by declaring Jesus a "sinner" notwithstanding the "signs" he performs.

If the Pharisees were prepared to listen (which is the task of a **תלמיד**), the "disciple" of Jesus, born steeped in sin, an **עם הארץ** who was once blind but has received the "light", *would* teach them (9,34c!) what they cannot see. The key to understanding Jesus and his activity (viz., his relationship to the Sabbath) is faith and he who believes on Jesus (viz., has become a disciple of Jesus) can teach that which the Law is incapable of revealing (but that to which it testifies—for him who has believed). The disciples of Moses must "listen" to the disciples of Jesus (9,27) if they are to discover the "truth" and obtain the "eternal life" promised by the Scriptures they search so eagerly (Jn 5,39f). The *μαθηταὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ* continue the *ἐργον* of their master; that of making known the "truth" which is to be found in Christ alone and in his "word" (cf. Jn 17,7f.20).

The "dénouement" (9,35-41) shows who is blind and in sin: it is those who refuse to believe on Jesus, not those who accept him and his teaching.

#### D) *Jn 18,19-24*

In speaking about Jn 10,22-38,<sup>156</sup> an attempt was made to show that the hearing related at Jn 18,19-24 takes place before Annas, not before Caiaphas. We maintained that the trial scene before Caiaphas has been transposed by Jn into the period of Jesus' public ministry and that, with the public ministry, the trial of Jesus by the Jews comes to an end. We also indicated that the nature and purpose of the hearing before Annas was strongly in favour of such an assumption. We now wish to consider the pericope in greater detail: it is the last time the *διδασχὴ* (*διδάσκειν*) of Jesus will be mentioned in the Fourth Gospel.

<sup>155</sup> On the Rabbinic principle, cf. *Str.-Bill.*, II, 534 (on Jn 9,16); 535 (on Jn 9,31). The principle is found often in the OT (Ps 18,41f; Prov 1,27ff; 15,29; Is 1,11.15; Job 27,8f; 35,12.13; Ps 66,17-20; 109,7).

<sup>156</sup> See above, pp. 64ff.

The hearing does not present itself as a "trial scene" at all.<sup>157</sup> It takes place before Annas, who was not the High Priest in office at the time (before whom a formal trial would have to be held); there is no mention of the Council (Sanhedrin) having been gathered for the occasion (vs. Jn 11,47; comp. 7,45ff); no witnesses are called or heard; only an implicit accusation is made; no sentence is pronounced.

*The question of Annas.* Annas questions Jesus *περὶ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ περὶ τῆς διδασχῆς αὐτοῦ*. "Questioning" was an element of standard procedure during a trial, but it need not have a technical sense here. If we suppose we are dealing with an official hearing, Annas would be violating a point of legal procedure which considered it improper to question the accused,<sup>158</sup> so as to have him condemn himself. The answer of Jesus (v. 21) would be asking Annas to take testimony from witnesses, as legal procedure demanded. Such an interpretation seems highly improbable.<sup>159</sup> The hearing is but an informal inquiry. The question of Annas is quite "rhetorical" and only serves to introduce the words of Jesus contained in the following verses.

The question has appeared strange to some. Why should Annas question Jesus about his teaching and his disciples rather than about his person, as the Synoptics do? <sup>160</sup> In reality the person of Jesus is very much involved. The question implies that there is some irregularity in Jesus' teaching. He is considered a false teacher, suspect of heresy, the founder of an "unorthodox" school.

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<sup>157</sup> Vs. Bultmann (500), who speaks of a "regelrechtes Verhör" and holds that the Sanhedrin has been gathered. Rightly Loisy (837); Barrett (437): "There is really no trial narrative at all".

<sup>158</sup> Cf. I. Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels. First and Second Series* (Cambridge, 1917-24), II, 132-134.

<sup>159</sup> But see Bultmann (following Holtzmann), who holds that the request of Jesus is to show that the whole procedure is a "farce". In somewhat the same sense: Westcott, Lagrange, Barrett. Loisy (837) rejects this supposition. In our view the assumption that Jesus is demanding that witnesses be heard goes against the whole purpose Jn was setting himself: Jesus has spoken openly, there is no further need to question him or anyone else (i.e., by calling witnesses—this does not mean that there cannot be a secondary reference to the need of hearing his disciples in order to form a judgement about his teaching after his departure, as Hoskyns maintains).

<sup>160</sup> Cf. Barrett, ad 18,19.



Loisy asks:<sup>161</sup> Is Jesus being questioned as a would-be-Messiah (or as one who "made himself" Son of God) or as a false teacher? This is a false dilemma. Annas is questioning Jesus as if he were a "false teacher" (περὶ τῆς διδαχῆς αὐτοῦ), founder of a school which is a heretical "sect" (περὶ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ), but the reader realizes that the διδαχὴ of Jesus is his self-revelation (λαλεῖν) and his μαθηταί are those who have believed on him. In inquiring about Jesus' διδαχὴ and μαθηταί the accusation reflected is the same as that found at Jn 7,45ff; 11,45ff; 10,22ff.

There is furthermore no reason for distinguishing between the "teaching" of Jesus and his "disciples", as if Annas were asking first about his doctrine and then about the aim he was pursuing in gathering followers (sedition!).<sup>162</sup> The two points form a unit and constitute one and the same question.<sup>163</sup> What is at stake is the self-revelation of Jesus (διδαχὴ) which leads men to accept him—his teaching—(μαθηταί); it is not perceived as revelation by Annas (by the Jews) and is consequently considered false teaching which leads to apostasy.

*The answer of Jesus* brings out that it is his revelation which has been judged and condemned as "false teaching". Λαλεῖν, the term of revelation, is used with insistence and equivalently for διδάσκειν. One recalls that λαλεῖν and διδάσκειν were used to qualify the discourses of Jesus found at Jn 7-8, in which Jesus revealed the mystery of his being (comp. ἐδίδαξα ... ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ... ἐλάλησα 18,20 and 7,14.28; 8,20.28), and one understands that, if Jesus stands "bound" (18,24) before Annas, it is because of his λαλεῖν. His crime has been to teach that he is the Son of God in whom the Father reveals himself.

But the emphasis is not so much on the λαλεῖν of Jesus as it is on the public nature of his λαλεῖν (διδάσκειν). Jn could not have given the thought greater emphasis: παρρησίᾳ λελάληκα τῷ κοσμῷ · ἐγὼ πάντοτε ἐδίδαξα ἐν συναγωγῇ καὶ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, ὅπου πάντες ... συνέρχονται ... ἐν κρυπτῷ ἐλάλησα οὐδέν. Jesus is not rejecting the accusation of being the author of a *Geheimlehre*! <sup>164</sup> Jn is saying that

<sup>161</sup> Comm., 835.

<sup>162</sup> So Barrett (ad 18,19), who qualifies such a view (held by Holtzmann and Lagrange) as "doubtful".

<sup>163</sup> Cf. Loisy (837); Bultmann (500, n. 1).

<sup>164</sup> So B. Weiss; Lagrange (ad 18,20).

“zur Diskussion ist es zu spät; die Auseinandersetzung mit dem Judentum ist zu Ende”.<sup>165</sup> The revelation Jesus made was “to the world”, it was public and open. Jesus need not repeat what he has already said nor add anything—there is nothing to add. The Jews have heard and have judged. A “hearing” is no longer necessary. Through the answer of Jesus, Jn wishes to show that the condemnation of Jesus (judgement by the Jews) is a “fait accompli” and has run parallel to his self-revelation during his public ministry.

The thought has been expressed quite clearly in Jn 1-12. The trial of Jesus (of the world) starts the moment in which the Word comes into the world and begins to manifest himself in word and deed (Jn 1,9-12). Throughout the public ministry the Jews are continually “judging” Jesus, without realizing that they are the ones who are being judged. The “judgement” of Jesus by the Jews truly sets in with chapter 5, but it is especially in the final chapters, consecrated to his public ministry, that this is emphasized. After the great controversies of chapters 7-8 (cf. especially 7,24.51; 8,15), Jesus is put on trial in Jn 9. Then comes the confrontation recorded in Jn 10, 22-39. With this, one might say, the confrontation of Jesus with the Jews has reached its term. The public ministry is practically over. The death and resurrection of Lazarus, manifestation of Christ’s power to give life and anticipation of his own death and resurrection, leads to the “official” decision to put him to death (Jn 11,47-53). The anointing at Bethany is Jesus’ symbolic burial; his triumphant entry into Jerusalem the symbol of his future kingship over Israel (believers); the arrival of the *Ἑλλήνες* an anticipation of the “gathering in of the fruit” which begins with his death and exaltation (cf. 12,27-33). Chapters 11-12 are thus under the sign of the “consummation”. The time of the controversies is past, Jesus has run his course (12,24 !).

It is highly significant that the “epilogue” found at the close of Jn 12 and which recapitulates Jesus’ whole public ministry<sup>166</sup> should be the last occasion before Jn 18,20-21 in which Jesus gives such emphasis to his *λαλεῖν*. The verb is greatly stressed at 12,48-50 even as it is at Jn 18,20-22.23.<sup>167</sup> Jn 12,44-50, the last public cry of Jesus,

<sup>165</sup> Bultmann (500, ad 18,21).

<sup>166</sup> Cf. Dodd, *Interpretation*, 379-383.

<sup>167</sup> The *ἐλάλησα* of v. 23 has a deeper meaning than would seem at first sight. Cf. Westcott, ad loc.

stresses the importance of this λαλεῖν to the Jews, which reached its culmination and conclusion in Jn 10,22-39.<sup>168</sup>

Although the revelation of Jesus will be set forth and completed in his private discourses to his disciples (in Jn 13-17 the verb λαλεῖν is found sporadically), it comes to an end as public self-revelation to the Jews in "word" with the end of his public ministry. It is in keeping with this that Jn avoids using the verb λαλεῖν except in the hearing before Annas, where the verb is used frequently and refers back to what Jesus "spoke" (λαλεῖν) *during his public ministry*. After this, the verb will appear only once more: Pilate will ask, astonished: ἐμοὶ οὐ λαλεῖς?

We may conclude that Jn has given a deep theological meaning to the hearing before Annas.<sup>169</sup> He has indicated why he has glossed over the Jewish trial completely or, better: why he has projected it back into the period of the public ministry (the trial before Pilate is *not* the Johannine equivalent of the Jewish trial.)<sup>170</sup> The trial of Jesus by the Jews has already taken place before his arrest; at 18,31 and 19,7 it is assumed that the Jews have already condemned Jesus to death. Jn 18,19-24 further voices the grounds which have led to such a verdict—it is the self-revelation of Jesus, his λαλεῖν (διδάσκειν), which the Jews consider to be πλάνη, leading to apostasy.

### Conclusion

Jn presents the teaching-revelation of Jesus as the revelation (teaching) of the "last days"—the final and perfect revelation of God, given in the Son.

As can be gathered from the four points examined above, this "final" teaching is presented as having a double relationship to the Law:

<sup>168</sup> F. Hahn ("Der Prozess Jesu nach dem Johannesevangelium", *EKK* 2 (1970) 23-96, 28) writes that the public controversy of Jesus with the Jews reaches "ihren Höhepunkt und vorläufigen Abschluss" in Jn 10,22-39. We do not consider the Abschluss "vorläufig". What Jesus has to say at 12,23ff (about his death!) can no longer be considered a public confrontation with the Jews. The audience is the ὄχλος (12,29.34) favourable to Jesus (12,17f), not the Jews. Their question at 12,34 is rhetorical.

<sup>169</sup> Vs. Dodd (*Interpretation*, 93), who writes: "That it (the hearing before Annas) is a free composition of the evangelist is inherently improbable, since it lacks entirely any trace of theological interest".

<sup>170</sup> Vs. Loisy (837). See what is said below on the trial before Pilate, pp. 307; 323ff.

1) It is no longer a mere elaboration or explanation of what was said in the Law. Jn took care clearly to mark off Jesus' revelation (teaching) from the teaching which is to be found in the Law and which was propounded by traditional Judaism. The teaching of Jesus is a "new" revelation, not to be found in the Law. As such it supersedes the Law. The Law is subservient to the teaching Jesus brings and not vice versa.

2) The teaching of Jesus is meant to be understood as that which, of its very nature, should compel the adherence of all those who take the teaching of Moses seriously. While underlining the novelty and absolute uniqueness of Jesus' teaching, Jn is careful to present it in categories familiar to Jewish thought. Jesus is presented as *the* Rabbi, *the* teacher of Israel. The objections and reservations of the Jews are shown to be unfounded; his "truthfulness" and the divine origin of his teaching are discussed in a manner intelligible to a Jewish audience.

More rigorous and systematic conclusions, which can be drawn from Jn's presentation of Jesus as teacher and of his teaching, will be possible only after we have examined what Jesus has to say in defence of this teaching (Part Two). Such a systematic summary will be attempted in Part Five.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE CHARGE THAT JESUS IS AN ENEMY OF THE JEWISH NATION—JN 11,47-52

The Fourth Gospel speaks of what seems to be an official gathering <sup>1</sup> of the Council (Sanhedrin) only at 11,47ff. The meeting is presided by Caiaphas,<sup>2</sup> the High Priest, and it is at this meeting that Jesus' death is officially decreed. "From that day on they took counsel how to put him to death" (v. 53). The verse recalls Mt 26,4 <sup>3</sup> and Mt 26,1-5 seems to refer to a preliminary meeting of the Council.

Although Jn 11,49-53 cannot be called a "trial" in the strict sense, it takes on the appearance of a Johannine equivalent for the trial before Caiaphas.

We have noted that the trial before Caiaphas is omitted in Jn 18. It is noteworthy that, at the precise moment in which the hearing before Annas, the (omitted) hearing before Caiaphas and the trial before Pilate are about to begin, the evangelist should take care to designate Caiaphas as *ὁ συμβουλευσας τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὅτι συμφέρει ἓνα ἄνθρωπον ἀποθανεῖν ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ*—a direct reference to Jn 11, 50. It is precisely this counsel which led the High Priests and Pharisees to decree the death of Jesus (11,53). The position of the event recorded in Jn 11,47ff in the Book of Signs, the great theological interest given to the words of Caiaphas, the fact that Jesus' death sentence is pronounced on this occasion and under the leadership and counsel of the High Priest, indicate that Jn intended this meeting of the Council to be the official conclusion of the "trial" of Jesus by the Jews <sup>4</sup>—which is spread over the whole of his public ministry.

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<sup>1</sup> Lagrange (ad loc.) calls attention to the absence of the article before *συνέδριον* and concludes that we are not dealing with an official meeting. In the same sense : B. Weiss ; Schanz ; Bernard (ad 11,47). Loisy (662f), Bultmann, Barrett ("probably") and Brown (441) speak of a convocation of the Sanhedrin, an official meeting.

<sup>2</sup> Caiaphas is certainly the central figure of Jn 11,47-53. Even if it is not said that he is presiding the meeting (Schanz, Weiss), this is most probably implied.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Dodd, *Hist. Trad.*, 27.

<sup>4</sup> Vs. F. Hahn, who sees the "eigentlicher Prozess der Juden gegen Jesus" as taking place before Pilate (*art. cit.*, 39 and 85).

A) *Jn 11,48*

V. 48 states that, if Jesus is left unhindered, all will believe on him;<sup>5</sup> as a result, the Romans will come and take away both the Temple<sup>6</sup> (city of Jerusalem) and the nation.

It is not obvious just in what way belief on Jesus should bring about the destruction of the Jewish nation. The commentators are almost unanimous in affirming that Jesus is being represented as a political Messiah by the Jews.<sup>7</sup> Were such a Messiah to gather universal support, the Romans would intervene and deprive the Jews of their Temple worship and national existence. These authors give great importance to the role the Romans play in v. 48. The intervention of the Romans must be motivated and the most obvious explanation is to suppose that the Jews are interpreting the messiahship of Jesus as they did at Jn 6,14f. However, such a view of Jesus' messiahship is far removed from Johannine christology and, even as a misconception of the Jews, is out of place so late in the Gospel<sup>8</sup> (the accusation during the trial before Pilate is a false accusation, the true charge being that Jesus made himself Son of God).<sup>9</sup>

There is another avenue of approach to Jn 11,48 which, in our estimation, leads to an interpretation which is more in keeping with the intention of the evangelist. Our point of departure is that it is the evangelist who is speaking and who is attributing to the Jews

<sup>5</sup> The patristic evidence which supports the omission of πάντες πιστεύουσιν εἰς αὐτόν (cf. M.-E. Boismard, *RB* 60 (1953) 350f) is far too slight to warrant serious consideration. Internal criticism is also against the omission.

<sup>6</sup> *Τόπος*, especially used as it is in conjunction with *ἔθνος*, almost certainly designates the Temple, rather than Jerusalem. Cf. Jn 4,20; Mt 24,15; Act 6,13.14; 7,7; 21,28; 2 Macc 3,12.18.30; 3 Macc 1,9; 2.14 and, especially, 2 Macc 5,19 (*ἔθνος* ... *τόπος*). Most of the commentators incline towards this sense (Bernard, Bultmann, Barrett, Hoskyns, Lagrange, Lightfoot, Brown). The Temple also suits the theological import of the pericope much better. See below.

<sup>7</sup> Westcott, Bernard, Bultmann, Barrett, W. Bauer, Lagrange, Loisy, Brown. Hoskyns is more prudent. He writes that "powerful arrogance of this kind (illegitimate assumption of divine authority) must have political results".

<sup>8</sup> Loisy (662) notes that such a representation "déconcerte le lecteur" but adds: "mais il faut bien aboutir à la Passion!"

<sup>9</sup> It is wrong to affirm, with Bultmann, that the Jews are here showing the same misunderstanding of Jesus' messiahship they will show before Pilate. The accusation in Jn 18 is not due to error, but to wilful misrepresentation. To suppose that the Jews are presented as obedient Roman subjects, zealous defenders of the Roman hegemony (Loisy, 663), is to miss the mark completely.

words which go beyond their first level of meaning. The words of Caiaphas and the profound theological interpretation given to them by the evangelist are ample proof that such a hypothesis has a firm foundation.

The context of Jn 11,48 is important. By presenting the meeting of the Council and the formal condemnation to death of Jesus as the direct aftermath of the raising of Lazarus <sup>10</sup> (and the resulting faith in Jesus), the last and greatest of the *σημεῖα*, the summit and climax of Jesus' self-manifestation to the "Jews", Jn presents the condemnation of Jesus as the result of his whole public ministry. The raising of Lazarus has a "representative" value. It typifies all the *σημεῖα* Jesus worked, which were meant to reveal him as the Son of God, the giver of life (Jn 5,21.26), and to lead men to believe on him and thus have eternal life. Now (after the sign which is the clearest manifestation of Jesus' power to give life) the fact that Jesus, through his many signs, is leading men to believe on him is considered a threat to the very existence of the Jewish nation. It is therefore the whole activity of Jesus, his whole *ἔργον*, which is judged to be a peril to the "nation" at Jn 11,47f.

We have seen how the activity of Jesus had been judged by the Jews. 1) His *σημεῖα* had been considered violations of the Law—Jesus had been branded as a *ἁμαρτωλός*. Our analysis of the term *ἁμαρτωλός* (חטאי) in the Jewish writings <sup>11</sup> revealed much which appears directly relevant to Jn 11,47-53. A *ἁμαρτωλός* is one who despises the Law and flagrantly violates it in a persistent and habitual manner. He lives within Jewish society without being part of it since he does not accept or respect the socio-religious norms (the Torah) which constitute it and keep it in existence. He is therefore considered an "outsider", one who behaves against society—he is an enemy of the nation, assimilated to the Gentiles. The community must consequently take action against him: he must be "cut off", "cursed" or killed. Jesus, according to the Jews, falls into this category. It is not surprising that Caiaphas should counsel the Jews to do exactly as the Law prescribes. As an "evildoer" who goes against the interests of the nation, Jesus must be put to death.

<sup>10</sup> Jn 11,47-53, which has the appearance of a self-contained unit, is closely linked to the raising of Lazarus through verses 45-46. Thematically, the gift of life to Lazarus brings about Jesus' death and anticipates his resurrection and what it implies for man.

<sup>11</sup> See above, pp. 30ff.

2) The significance Jesus claimed for his signs had been considered blasphemy and the fact that he led men to believe on him had been construed as *πλάνη*. Branded as a *ἁμαρτωλός*, Jesus was all the more dangerous because he justified his behaviour by claiming to be the Son of God and led men to accept his claim, to believe on him.

Jn 11,48 sets the destruction of the nation (by the Romans) in direct relation to *πιστεύειν εἰς αὐτόν*. The connection is thereby immediately given with such texts as Jn 7,45-49 and 9,24-34 where belief on Jesus (*πιστεύειν εἰς αὐτόν*; cf. 7,48; 9,35.36.38) is equated with apostasy—falling away from the Torah, abandoning the teaching of Moses—and entails being “accursed” and “banished” from the community of orthodox Jews.<sup>12</sup> The formula *πιστεύειν εἰς αὐτόν* is used to describe the effect the raising of Lazarus had on a number of Jews at 11,45 and at 12,11. There is no reason to believe that at 11,48 it has a meaning other than the one it has at 11,45; 12,11 and elsewhere in the Gospel: faith on Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God (as Jesus has made clear at Jn 10,22ff).<sup>13</sup> At Jn 12,37 the evangelist can summarize the unbelief and hardness of heart of the Jews with the words: *τοσαῦτα δὲ αὐτοῦ σημεῖα πεποιηκότος ... οὐκ ἐπίστευον εἰς αὐτόν* so that, at 11,47f *πολλὰ ποιεῖ σημεῖα, ἔαν ἀφώμεν αὐτὸν οὕτως, πάντες πιστεύσουσιν εἰς αὐτόν* should mean that the Jews fear exactly what the evangelist wishes had come about. Instead, the self-revelation of Jesus produced a *κρίσις, σχίσμα* within the Jewish community.<sup>14</sup> It is no wonder that the activity of Jesus seemed dangerous to the Pharisees and High Priests: it divided the Jewish nation, it created discord and caused many to “fall away”. It was for these reasons (the Sabbath works, blasphemy, false teaching—which may all be reduced to: making himself Son of God and leading men to believe on him) that the Jews sought to arrest and put Jesus to death.<sup>15</sup> Were all to believe on Jesus this

<sup>12</sup> See above, pp. 43ff.

<sup>13</sup> Significantly enough, at Jn 10,22ff Jesus does not ask the Jews to believe on him (*πιστεύειν εἰς αὐτόν*)—which would be too much, given their blindness—but to believe (*πιστεύειν*, absolutely) or to believe him, his words (*πιστεύειν* with the dative).

<sup>14</sup> *Σχίσμα* is mentioned in conjunction with the attempts to convict Jesus as a *πλάνος*, a *ἁμαρτωλός* and a blasphemer (Jn 7,49; 9,16; 10,19), that is to say: as guilty of claiming to be what he is not (“of God”, the Son of God) and of inducing men to believe on him. The idea is also to be found at 11,45f, although the word *σχίσμα* is absent. Cf. W. Bauer, Bultmann, Brown (442).

<sup>15</sup> Jn 11,45ff would be the first instance in which the evangelist would be presenting



would mean universal apostasy. The meaning of Jn 11,48 seems to be that belief in Jesus signifies the end of Judaism *because Jesus is opposed to Moses and to the Torah, which is the "Existenzgrundlage" of Israel*.<sup>16</sup>

It is erroneous to wish to separate the "political" survival of Israel from its "religious" survival. Israel, in Jewish thought, could survive as a nation only if it remained faithful to the Torah since, in later Judaism, the Jewish nation became a religious community gathered around the Law.<sup>17</sup>

If the Jews speak of the intervention of the Romans as the event which would mark the end of the Temple and nation it is only because the Romans, *de facto*, destroyed Jerusalem between the time when the deliberation recorded in Jn 11,47-53 supposedly took place and the time when the Gospel was written.<sup>18</sup> The emphasis is on the destruction of the Jewish nation as such, the role of the Romans is incidental and hardly warrants the assumption that Jesus is being considered a political Messiah who is challenging the Roman supremacy and inducing the Jews to rebel.<sup>19</sup> The historical detail was introduced not to show that the Jews are again misrepresenting Jesus' messiahship, but for a very specific literary and theological reason. The affirmation is highly ironical: the advantage the Jews believe they will draw from the death of Jesus is a total illusion. Jesus was put to death and yet the Temple and nation were destroyed

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the murderous intent of the Jews as flowing from the conviction that Jesus' messianic claims are politically dangerous.

<sup>16</sup> "If one felt that his (Jesus') original notions on Jewish Law could call down the wrath of God and thus indirectly an increase in the Roman tyranny ..." J. D. M. Derrett (*Law in the New Testament* (London, 1970), 421) who, however, does not develop this line of thought.

<sup>17</sup> Gutbrod, *TWNT* IV, 1037, 10ff. Significantly enough, Jn speaks of the destruction of the Temple and nation, thus indicating that the political and religious aspect should not be separated.

<sup>18</sup> Not all authors maintain that Jn 11,48 has the destruction of Jerusalem of 70 A.D. in mind. Barrett believes it is "doubtless" a *vaticinium ex eventu*; Bernard hesitates. Loisy and Hoskyns reject this possibility.

<sup>19</sup> The observation of Derrett, "I do not think we can doubt but that St John wished to imply that the Jewish leaders' hands were forced by political necessity: but the passage itself can be read easily without this implication and is better so read, for the oft repeated charge that the Jews were afraid of Jesus as a rebel-leader seems to be largely imaginary" (*op. cit.*, 419) is correct, but the author gives in to "political" motivation in explaining the "hypothetical" reasoning of Caiaphas (cf. 420 and n. 3).

by the Romans. Is Jn suggesting that, had the Jews believed on Jesus and not killed him, Jerusalem would not have been destroyed? It is quite possible. Mt 23,37-39 (= Lk 13,34-37) and especially Lk 19,41-44 point decidedly in this direction. Primitive tradition considered the destruction of Jerusalem a direct result of Jesus' rejection by the Jews.

We may conclude that, for the Jews, Jesus is a threat to the nation (Judaism) because he leads men away from faithfulness to Moses and the Torah by leading them to become his disciples, to believe on him. Our conclusion is based upon the dramatic presentation of the "case" the Jews try to make against Jesus in the Book of Signs—the development and the theological implications of which we have tried to trace in the previous chapters.

Strong support for the view we have adopted can be gathered from the sequel (Jn 11,49-52), which shows that Jn has indeed conceived Jesus' *ἔργον* as putting an end to Judaism, but not in the same terms as the Jews. These verses explain the true sense in which Jesus' *ἔργον* marks the end of Judaism.

#### B) *Jn 11,49-52*

*Συμφέρει ὑμῖν ἵνα εἰς ἄνθρωπος ἀποθάνῃ ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ μὴ ὅλον τὸ ἔθνος ἀπόληται.*

In the light of 11,48 the utterance of Caiaphas simply means: since the activity of Jesus will lead to the destruction of the Jewish nation, it is advantageous that he be put to death; the death of one man is to be preferred to the destruction of the whole nation. Formulated positively: the death of Jesus will save the Jewish nation from destruction, destruction which would be inevitable, were Jesus not put to death.<sup>20</sup> Caiaphas is thinking in the same terms as his colleagues: as a *ἁμαρτωλός* and *πλάνος* Jesus goes against the interests of the nation, is in league with the Gentiles and will bring about the ruin of the chosen race if left unhindered. But the editorial comment of the evangelist, based upon the passage from *λαός* to *ἔθνος*, treats the words of the High Priest as "prophecy". Caiaphas says that

<sup>20</sup> Derrett argues, convincingly, for a derivation of the idea from the episode of Sheba and Joab (2 Sam 20,13-22). The teaching that a man may be lawfully put to death to effect the safety of many is found in Rabbinical sources which go back at least to the year 100 A.D. Cf. *op. cit.*, 420, n. 3 for the relevant texts.

Jesus will die "on behalf of the *people* (συμφέρει ... ἵνα ... ἀποθάνῃ ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ) and that not *all* the *nation* (μὴ ὅλον τὸ ἔθνος) perish".

We have attempted to show elsewhere<sup>21</sup> that the passage from λαός to ἔθνος in v. 50 is not due to chance and that the editorial comment can be understood only if the two terms are given two distinct meanings. *Ἐθνος* marks the Jewish nation, λαός the "people of God". The death of Christ is ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ or, expressed in equivalent terms, ἵνα καὶ τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ διεσκορπισμένα συναγάγῃ εἰς ἓν. Both λαός and τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ διεσκορπισμένα were "termini technici" for the "theocratic people", Israel. Jn gives the traditional terminology a new meaning. Λαός designates the new flock (ποιμνῇ) Christ forms by leading forth the sheep which belong to the fold of metropolitan Judaism (ἡ αὐλή αὐτῆς) and those which are not of this fold (Jn 10,16). It is faith in Christ which determines whether one belongs to the "chosen people" (λαός) or not; the τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ which form this people are no longer "Jews" (in the negative sense: "orthodox" Jews belonging to the Synagogue), but believers. Whether one is a member of the Jewish community or not (i.e., whether one is a faithful follower of the Torah, as interpreted and practiced by "orthodox" Judaism, or not) is no longer a determining factor. "Israel" is no longer perfectly identical with "the Jewish nation":<sup>22</sup> the λαός has become a nation (ἔθνος) like any other and the Jews no longer have the exclusive right to consider themselves members of the "people of God" simply because they are Jews. The death of Jesus gathers together the "scattered children of God" (all those who believe on him) and gives birth to the new λαός of God. It therefore marks the end of what was once the λαός of God. Traditional Judaism can no longer be considered the concrete expression of God's revelation, of his revealed will, the Jewish nation (as a religious-national body)<sup>23</sup> is no longer the "people of God".

Thus, paradoxically and contrary to what the Council and Caiaphas believe, it is the *death* of Jesus which brings about the end of Judaism—as is signified by the destruction of the Temple,<sup>24</sup> probably seen as

<sup>21</sup> For further details, see *art. cit.*, *NTS* 16 (1969-70) 114-129.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 123-125. See also *NTS* 21 (1974-75) 396-405.

<sup>23</sup> See below, pp. 293ff.

<sup>24</sup> The role the Temple plays in v. 48 deserves particular attention. The Temple and Judaism were inseparable. Jn (as well as the Synoptics) presents the relationship of the Gospel to Judaism under the form of Christ's relationship to the Temple

a result of Christ's rejection by the Jews.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, Christ's death *does* have salvific value<sup>26</sup> for the *ἔθνος* (the Jewish nation). Although his death does not save the Jewish nation from "material" or "political" destruction (and perhaps brings it about), although it brings the "old order" to an end by abolishing the privileges of Judaism (the traditional view according to which the followers of Moses, the community of the Torah, constitutes the "chosen people"), Jesus' death is *ὕπερ τοῦ ἔθνους* (v. 51). It saves a "remnant" of the "nation" from destruction (*μὴ ὄλον τοῦ ἔθνους ἀπόληται*; cf. 3,16; 10,28). The Jewish nation is no longer the people of God yet, through Christ's death, part of the Jewish nation becomes the nucleus of the new *λαός*. In a sense Judaism is done away with, abolished, destroyed; in another sense it lives on, transformed and absorbed into a new and greater reality.<sup>27</sup>

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(cf. G. Schrenk, *TWNT* III, art. *τὸ ἱερόν*, 241-245). In Jn the cleansing of the Temple (Jn 2,13ff) shows the intent of Jesus to "reform" Judaism (i.e., it has both a "negative" and "positive" aspect). Jesus restores the Temple because his body becomes the new Temple. Cullmann's view ("L'opposition contre le Temple de Jérusalem", *NTS* 5 (1958-59) 157-173), according to which the cleansing in Jn marks a more radical opposition to the Temple than that found in the Synoptics, cannot be held. Jn places the emphasis on the restoration rather than on the destruction of the Temple by Jesus! (cf. Dodd, *Hist. Trad.*, 91).

<sup>25</sup> This would be in keeping with the Johannine presentation of the cleansing of the Temple, where it is the Jews who will bring about the destruction of the Temple by rejecting Jesus. Bultmann interprets *λύσατε τὸν ναόν* (Jn 2,19) as an ironical imperative in the style of the prophets and believes that "durch solche Form (wird) indirekt gesagt, dass das Gericht der Tempelzerstörung die Folge des jüdischen Unglaubens an Jesus ist". Barrett (ad 11,48) is also of the opinion that, for Jn, the destruction of the Temple is a consequence of the rejection of Jesus.

<sup>26</sup> On the atoning power of the death of the just, which probably lies behind this second level of meaning, cf. Derrett, *op. cit.*, 418-423. When Derrett holds that Caiaphas is using this argument to convince the Council that Jesus should be put to death, even if innocent, because the death of the just is expiatory and Pilate, as the executor of the killing, will bear all the responsibility, his exegesis becomes too fanciful to be taken seriously.

<sup>27</sup> Hoskyns came close to the truth, but missed the connection between the events of the year 70 A.D. and the "spiritual" implications of Christ's death. He writes: "The author gives no indication that he intends to see in these words an unconscious prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70; not, presumably, because he is ignorant of that event, but because for him the end of the old Judaism was occasioned, not by the action of the Romans, but by its fulfilment in the death and resurrection of Jesus and by the emergence of the new children of God (2,19-22)". On this point see below, *passim*, but esp. pp. 297ff; 315ff.

We have spoken about the *death* of Christ and the meaning the evangelist gives it. It need not be said that, for Jn, the "activity" of Jesus and his death belong together as the one *ἔργον*, of which the "exaltation" of Jesus is the perfection and consummation. The death of Jesus, *as crowning act of his whole ἔργον*, brings about the end of Judaism. Given the intrinsic relationship between Jesus' death and his whole life, one must say that Jn also conceives the whole "work" of Jesus (both his words and works as leading men to believe on him and have life) as forming the new Israel (Jn calls it simply: Israel) and as abrogating the traditional privileges of the "Jews" ("orthodox" Judaism).

Jn thereby holds that Jesus' "work" does mark the end of traditional Judaism (the Jews were not completely wrong!), but not the destruction of Judaism purely and simply.

It is not possible, at this point, to determine exactly in what way the Christian community ("Israel", the *λαός*, the *ποιμνη*) is in continuity with Judaism and in what way it is its negation. All that is clear is that the fears of the Jews are not completely unfounded. Although Jesus is not a *πλάνος* but *ἀληθής*, not a false teacher but the Revealer, his *ἔργον* brings the Judaism the Pharisees and High Priests wish to preserve at all costs to an end while, at the same time, ensuring the survival of the Jewish nation as "people of God" insofar as it becomes part and parcel of a new reality: the *λαός τοῦ θεοῦ*.



PART TWO

THE LAW TESTIFIES AGAINST THE JEWS  
AND IN FAVOUR OF JESUS





In the First Part of this dissertation, we have dealt with the Law as a norm which the Jews vainly try to use against Jesus in order to judge and condemn him.

In the Second Part, we wish to show how the Fourth Gospel makes clear that the Law is not opposed to Jesus (viz., Jesus is not opposed to the Law), but speaks in his favour. The Jews, working with a limited (false) understanding of the Law (viz., misunderstanding Jesus and the Law itself), are unable to meet the requirements of the Law—they go against the Law by condemning and seeking to kill Jesus (Jn 7,19 and 7,51).

The Sabbath work of Jesus is the fulfilment of the Law (Jn 7, 21-23.24).

The claim of Jesus to being the Son of God is justified by the Law (Jn 10,34-36).

The teaching (self-revelation) of Jesus is “truthful” according to the Law. OT revelation and the Law testify to Jesus (Jn 5,31-40); belief in Moses and his Torah leads to belief in Jesus and his word because Moses wrote about him (Jn 5,45-47); the *μαρτυρία* of Jesus and the Father is valid according to the Law (Jn 8,12-20); the Law itself had prophesied that one day all men would be taught by God in Jesus (Jn 6,45).

The outcome can only be that the “true Israelite” (as opposed to the “Jews”) comes to Jesus and confesses that he is the Son of God, the King of Israel (Jn 1,45). The reason why the Jews reject Jesus is not faithfulness to the Law and Moses (Jn 5,41-44)—to reject Jesus is to reject the Law !

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE JEWS GO AGAINST THE LAW BY CONDEMNING JESUS—JN 7,19 AND JN 7,51

#### 1. JN 7,19—(JN 7,17)

The link of Jn 7,19 with the preceding and following verses is of paramount importance if we are to arrive at a correct understanding of the accusation Jesus makes against the Jews. It will therefore be necessary to consider the articulation of Jn 7,14-24 before trying to determine the precise meaning of v. 19.

#### A) *The place and function of vv. 19f in the immediate context*

Whether Jn 7,15-24 is placed after 5,47 or not,<sup>1</sup> it is generally agreed that vv. 14.(15)-24 form a unit.<sup>2</sup> But the various captions or headings given to our section by the commentaries<sup>3</sup> and by Schneider<sup>4</sup> show that it is itself composed of smaller units. The first unit (vv. 14-18) has been considered above;<sup>5</sup> the third (vv. 21-23.(24)) will be considered further on.<sup>6</sup>

Vv. 19-20 fall between these two well-defined units. V. 19 comes

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<sup>1</sup> See the Excursus on the relationship of Jn 7,15-24 to Jn 5, pp. 169ff.

<sup>2</sup> Jn 7,15-24 are considered a unit by Bernard, Bultmann (with signs of having been retouched), C. C. Oke ("At the Feast of the Booths. A Suggested Rearrangement of Jn 7-9", *ExpTim* 47 (1935-36) 425-427; 48 (1936-37) 189), G. H. C. Macgregor ("The Rearrangement of John 7 and 8", *ExpTim* 33 (1921-22) 74-78); Jn 7,14-24 are a unit according to Lagrange, Dodd, Barrett, Brown, J. Schneider ("Zur Komposition von Joh 7", *ZNW* 45 (1954) 108-119, 114), W. A. Meeks (*op. cit.*, 44-47).

<sup>3</sup> Jn 7,14-24 is entitled: "Défense de Jesus au sujet du Sabbat contre le parti pris meurtrier des Juifs", by Lagrange; "Jesus' right to teach, resumption of the Sabbath question", by Brown; "The fulfilment of the Mosaic Law concerning the Sabbath and concerning circumcision", by Hoskyns; "First dialogue: theme, Moses and Christ", by Dodd.

<sup>4</sup> Schneider (*art. cit.*, 114) holds that 7,14-24 deals with Jesus' teaching, but then goes on to say (115) that vv. 14-24 contain three topics: 1) the teaching of Jesus (!); 2) the Law; 3) circumcision.

<sup>5</sup> See pp. 87ff.

<sup>6</sup> See pp. 158ff.

as a surprise. Moses appears unexpectedly on the scene. Jesus accuses the Jews of not doing the Law Moses gave them (v. 19a,b) and asks them why they are seeking to kill him (v. 19c). The charge is denied by the Jews (v. 20).

The relation of vv. 19-20 to vv. 14-18 and vv. 21-24 is not immediately evident, nor is the connection of v. 19a,b with vv. 19c-20 immediately obvious. It may well be that v. 19a,b represents an isolated *logion* which has been woven into the debate at this point.<sup>7</sup> We do not wish to enter upon a hypothetical reconstruction of the text,<sup>8</sup> the question is rather that of determining the meaning the *logion* acquires in its present context and its relationship to the sections which immediately precede and follow.

Bultmann<sup>9</sup> believes that *καὶ ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν* in v. 18 is a "Zusatz" of the evangelist which, given its double meaning, serves as a transition to vv. 19-24. Although it may be conceded that the negative formulation offers a better transition than the positive to the following verse, both *ἀληθὴς ἐστιν* and *ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν*, in our opinion, constitute the immediate link between vv. 14-18 and vv. 19-20. The very equivalence which, as we have tried to show, exists between the two expressions seems to demand this.<sup>10</sup> But, with this, the connection of v. 19f with vv. 14-18 and/or vv. 21-24 is still far from clear.

According to some exegetes vv. 19.(20) refer to what precedes,<sup>11</sup> rather than to what follows; according to others they refer rather to what follows.<sup>12</sup> The position adopted will depend upon the exact meaning one gives to the accusation Jesus makes against the Jews.

If the interpretation we propose is correct, vv. 19.(20) are what might be called a "bridge" between the previous and the following sections. The theme of the continuity between the Law and Jesus

<sup>7</sup> On the composite nature of Jn 7-8, cf. Dodd, *Interpretation*, 355.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Bultmann, 208f, who ascribes the abrupt passage to the redactional activity of the evangelist and attempts to isolate 19a,b, as belonging to the evangelist, from 20.21a, as belonging (perhaps) to the redactor.

<sup>9</sup> Comm., 207, n. 1.

<sup>10</sup> *Ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν* formulates negatively what is already contained in *ἀληθὴς ἐστιν*. Both are "transitional" (see below) and there is no indication that *ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν* is a later addition.

<sup>11</sup> Lagrange, Hoskyns, Barrett.

<sup>12</sup> Loisy, Zahn, Bernard, Lightfoot (with reservations). Bultmann (208, n. 12) takes v. 19 as "ganz allgemein gemeint" and refuses to refer it to v. 23.

(his words and works) is present both in vv. 14-18 and 21-23. The whole question of Jesus' teaching and its relation to the Law, which is behind vv. 14-16, comes to the surface in v. 17. V. 18 links recognition of the doctrine of Jesus to that of his person and affords the immediate nexus with v. 19 through the words ἀληθὴς ἐστιν καὶ ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν.<sup>13</sup> The thematic continuity is indicated by the parallelism between ποιεῖν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ and ποιεῖν τὸν νόμον. If the Jews did the will of God they would recognize the divine origin of Jesus and his teaching; if they did the Law they would not seek to kill him. Vv. 19.(20) are also closely related to what follows since vv. 21-23 explain in what sense the desire to kill Jesus is against the Law. The Sabbath work of Jesus fulfills the Law; to seek to kill him means to turn against the one to whom the Law pointed and hence against the Law itself.

In chapter 5, 16-18 two grounds are given for the persecution of Jesus and the desire of putting him to death: a) the activity of Jesus, his "works"; b) the explanation Jesus gives to his "works", his ῥήματα. We thus have the two Johannine constants: ἔργα (σημεῖα) and ῥήματα (λόγος). In Jn 7, 14-18 and 21-23 we find these two constants once again: the διδαχή—λαλεῖν of Jesus (vv. 14-18) and his ἔργα (vv. 21-23). Since the Jews do not wish to do the will of God, they cannot understand or explain the nature of Jesus' teaching and Jesus himself is not seen for what he is (the Revealer). For the same reason the healing of the cripple, "sign" of Jesus' salvific work, is misunderstood—it appears to be a violation of the Law rather than that to which the Law tended: the healing of the whole man.

Whether the views on the structure and articulation of Jn 7, 14-24 we have just exposed prove acceptable or not will depend primarily upon the interpretation to be given to οὐδεὶς ἐξ ὑμῶν ποιεῖ τὸν νόμον (v. 19). The expression τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν and τὸν νόμον ποιεῖν are found used by Jn in the immediate vicinity of each other (7, 17. 19), which may indicate an affinity of meaning or, at least, the possibility that they cast light on each other. Since they have an identical meaning in the Jewish writings,<sup>14</sup> we will be well advised to begin our examination of Jn 7, 19 by saying a few words about Jn 7, 17.

<sup>13</sup> It is quite possible that the passage from vv. 14-18 to v. 19 was motivated by Dt 18, 18-22, as Meeks, following T. F. Glasson, *Moses in the Fourth Gospel* (London, 1963), suggests (*op. cit.*, 44-47).

<sup>14</sup> See what is said below, pp. 369ff.

## B) Jn 7,17

The formula  $\tau\acute{o}\ \theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\eta\mu\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\ \pi\omicron\iota\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$  will be analyzed in detail in the Fourth Part,<sup>15</sup> but we may be allowed at this point to anticipate some of our conclusions.

In the Jewish literature  $\pi\omicron\iota\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu\ \tau\acute{o}\ \theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\eta\mu\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  is equivalent to  $\pi\omicron\iota\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu\ \tau\acute{o}\nu\ \nu\acute{o}\mu\omicron\nu$  because the will of God finds its concrete and exclusive expression in the Law. At Jn 7,17 the desire to do the will of God ( $\tau\acute{o}\ \theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\eta\mu\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\ \pi\omicron\iota\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$ ) is set down as a condition for recognizing the  $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\chi\acute{\eta}$  of Jesus as being "of God", that is to say : for accepting his teaching. Were the  $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\chi\acute{\eta}$  of Jesus simply that of a  $\rho\acute{\alpha}\beta\beta\acute{\iota}$ — $\delta\iota\delta\acute{\alpha}\sigma\kappa\alpha\lambda\omicron\varsigma$  (in the customary sense of the word) or of a "man of God" (a prophet), if it were "orthodox" Rabbinical teaching, it would be part and parcel of the Law, for all authentic "teaching" or "tradition", be it written or unwritten, is part of the Law given to Moses, according to Judaism.<sup>16</sup> Those who are willing to do the divine will (the Law) would therefore recognize the teaching of Jesus as authentic (orthodox), as "of God", and would accept it.

We have seen that, in his presentation of Jesus' teaching,<sup>17</sup> Jn marks it off from traditional Jewish teaching.<sup>18</sup> We have also endeavoured to show that the teaching of Jesus is not presented as something which is *opposed* to the teaching of Moses (although the Pharisees think it is), but that Jn presents it as in some way continuous with traditional teaching, notwithstanding its novelty and uniqueness.<sup>19</sup>

This ambivalence is reflected in the use of the formula :  $\tau\acute{o}\ \theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\eta\mu\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\ \pi\omicron\iota\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$ . The teaching of Jesus is revelation. If doing the will of God is the condition for recognizing it as such and accepting it, this can only mean that the expression has assumed a new meaning : it means "to believe". Faith alone allows one to discover the divine origin of Jesus' teaching (that he is the Revealer).

Yet the formula  $\tau\acute{o}\ \theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\eta\mu\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\ \pi\omicron\iota\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$  (as the parallel formula  $\tau\acute{o}\nu\ \nu\acute{o}\mu\omicron\nu\ \pi\omicron\iota\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$  in v. 19 indicates) was apparently not chosen without reason. It would seem to indicate that, if the characteristic of the

<sup>15</sup> See below, pp. 368ff.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Moore, *Judaism*, I, 253-257.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Chapter Three, pp. 79ff.

<sup>18</sup> See above, pp. 81-83.

<sup>19</sup> See above, pp. 83ff.

"children of God" in the OT was their readiness to accept and follow the Law, what *now* characterizes the children of God is their readiness to accept the διδαχή of Jesus as ἀλήθεια (cf. Jn 8,40-47), because both are, in their own right, expression of God's will. This continuity is marked by the formula Jn uses. It suggests the acceptance of the Law, but refers to the acceptance of Jesus' word. The Law and the teaching of Jesus are thus presented as related realities which are not mutually exclusive.

The strength of this reasoning rests not only upon what has been said above concerning the teaching of Jesus and what will be said further on concerning the Johannine use of the expression τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν; it finds immediate support in the explicit reference to "doing the Law" in Jn 7,19. At the same time Jn 7,17 helps us to come to grips with Jn 7,19.

C) *The transition from vv. 14-18 to vv. 19-20*

The passage from the "will to do the will of God" as the condition for accepting the teaching of Jesus as revelation (vv. 14-18) to that of the Jews "not doing the Law" (vv. 19-20) is capital. We have objected both to Bultmann's interpretation of ἀληθὴς ἐστίν—ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν (Jesus is "wahrhaftig", "echt", there is no "Trug", "Schein" in him)<sup>20</sup> and to the manner in which he conceives the passage from v. 18 to v. 19.<sup>21</sup> In our view, ἀληθὴς ἐστίν and ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν express that (the mystery of) God is revealed in the person of Jesus and both offer the immediate transition to v. 19.

We have seen that ἀλήθεια in the OT and, in a more conspicuous manner, in Qumran and the Test XII, was connected, indeed almost identified, with the Law.<sup>22</sup> Notwithstanding such texts as Mal 2,5 and Test Dan 6,9,<sup>23</sup> we would hesitate to affirm that Jn has retained

<sup>20</sup> See above, pp. 97ff.

<sup>21</sup> See what has already been said on this point on pp. 88f; 92ff. Bultmann believes that the passage is afforded by ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν. Since there is no ἀδικία in Jesus, the Jews should not seek to kill him. Ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν would have been added by the evangelist to the question found in the "Quelle" (τί με ζητεῖτε ἀποκτείνειν) in order to have the Jews appear as violators of the Law. The evangelist thus created confusion in the text.

<sup>22</sup> See above, pp. 95-97.

<sup>23</sup> Mal 2,5: νόμος ἀληθείας ἦν ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀδικία οὐχ εὐρέθη ἐν χεῖλεσιν

the association "truth"—Law, were it not for Jn 1,17, where ἀλήθεια is used in immediate connection with νόμος<sup>24</sup> (cf. further Jn 17,17, compared with Ps 118(119),142) and, more important still, for the fact that, in vv. 18-19, the Jews are accused of not doing the Law because they seek to kill Jesus. In these verses ἀληθής ἐστιν (εἰμι), τί με ζητεῖτε ἀποκτεῖναι, and οὐδεὶς ἐξ ὑμῶν ποιεῖ τὸν νόμον are to be taken together. The Jews do not do the Law because they seek to kill the one who is ἀληθής, who speaks τὴν ἀλήθειαν. One should compare Jn 8,39f: if the Jews were children of Abraham, they would do the works of Abraham (the reference is to the observance of the Law and faith, as we will attempt to show)<sup>25</sup> νῦν δὲ ζητεῖτέ με ἀποκτεῖναι, ἄνθρωπον ὃς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑμῖν λελάληκα ἣν ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ—they are therefore not children of Abraham. The connection ἡ ἀλήθεια—νόμος is further given by the parallelism between τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν and τὸν νόμον ποιεῖν. If the will to do the will of God is the condition for recognizing the origin and revelatory nature of Jesus' "teaching" (διδαχή, ἡ ἀλήθεια) and if, on the other hand, the two expressions τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν and τὸν νόμον ποιεῖν are correlated, then the "doing of the Law" is itself associated with the "truth" (ἡ ἀλήθεια). That is to say: τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν and τὸν νόμον ποιεῖν are *both* presented as the means for coming to know the "truth".

If Jn, as seems to be the case, has retained the association "truth"—Law, which is found in Judaism, it is highly probable that he is maintaining that the "doing of the Law" should lead to the acceptance of the "truth" *which is Jesus*.<sup>26</sup> The Torah, connected as it is in the Jewish mind with "truth" (ἀλήθεια) and "justice" (δικαιοσύνη), cannot demand the death of the one who is ἀληθής (ἡ ἀλήθεια) and in whom there is no ἀδικία.<sup>27</sup>

αὐτοῦ. Test D 6,9 (Christian gloss): ὁ σωτὴρ τῶν ἐθνῶν ἐστὶ γὰρ ἀληθής... καὶ (ἐκ)διδάσκων διὰ τῶν ἔργων τὸν νόμον κυρίου.

<sup>24</sup> See the section on Jn 1,17, pp. 534ff.

<sup>25</sup> See Part Four, pp. 393ff.

<sup>26</sup> At 1,17, Jn makes clear that the "truth" is to be found in Christ, not in the Law.

<sup>27</sup> We have put δίκαιος in brackets because, as we suggested above, it is not probable that Jn had the pair אמת—צדיק (ἀληθής—δίκαιος) in mind. If he had, ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν would offer a better transition to v. 19 than Bultmann realized. Jesus, on the one hand, would be held up as the one who, like God, is full of אמת וצדק; on the other hand, the reference to the Law, which is present in the value judgement "he is ἀληθής (δίκαιος)" (see what has been said above concerning this term, pp. 92f), recalls a number of OT texts which speak of the "just" (δίκαιος) being judged,

But this means giving ἀδικία a meaning other than the one it has for the Jews, it means seeing the Law (viz., seeing Jesus' activity) in another light. For the Jews ἀδικία is opposition to the Law as they understand it. According to such an understanding, the activity of Jesus appears opposed to the Law; ψεῦδος, πλάνη and ἀδικία characterize him and his work. For Jn, the Jewish understanding of the Law is no longer normative and his view of ἀδικία and ἁμαρτία<sup>28</sup> differs from that of the Jews. Just as there can be no ἀδικία or ἁμαρτία in Jesus because he is "from God", "from above", "not of this world", etc., so is it the attitude of the Jews towards Jesus (ἡ ἀλήθεια) which determines whether they are in "sin" (ἁμαρτίαν ἔχειν) or not (cf. Jn 15,22.24).

This new or authentic understanding of the Law is brought out in v. 19. It is hardly likely that Jn (Jesus) should be inviting the Jews to "do the Law" in the sense they would give to the expression. In this sense *they* keep the Law, Jesus *does not*.

#### D) *The meaning of οὐδεὶς ἐξ ὑμῶν ποιεῖ τὸν νόμον*

The moment in which one realizes that the Law in Jn is not a univocal term, one is no longer tempted to interpret οὐδεὶς ἐξ ὑμῶν ποιεῖ τὸν νόμον in the sense that: 1) the Jews are themselves unable to keep all the precepts of the Law<sup>29</sup> and therefore should not take exception to Jesus' work on the Sabbath; 2) the Jews themselves make exceptions to the precepts of the Law by circumcising on the Sabbath<sup>30</sup> and therefore should consider Jesus' Sabbath work as one such exception; 3) the Jews do not keep the Law because they circumcise on the Sabbath;<sup>31</sup> 4) the Jews, by seeking to kill Jesus, are themselves going against the precept of the Law: "Thou shalt

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persecuted and put to death by "sinners" (ἁμαρτωλοί). This would have led Jn to pass from v. 18, where Jesus claims that there is no ἀδικία in him (that he is δίκαιος) to the idea of the Jews going against the Law (not giving a κρίσιν δικάϊαν v. 24) by persecuting the "just one" and seeking to put him to death. They, the supposed δίκαιοι, are acting as ἁμαρτωλοί—the persecution of the "just" being the traditional role of the "evildoer". This paradox is the result of a misuse (misunderstanding) of the Law.

<sup>28</sup> The two terms are synonymous. Comp. Jn 7,18f with Jn 8,46: being ἀληθής or speaking τὴν ἀλήθειαν excludes the possibility of ἀδικία or ἁμαρτία in Jesus.

<sup>29</sup> Thomas Aq. (who refers to Act 7,43; 15,10), Schanz, Loisy.

<sup>30</sup> Zahn, Bernard, Lightfoot and Barrett (both with reservations).

<sup>31</sup> Loisy, Bernard, Lightfoot and Barrett (both with reservations).



not kill".<sup>32</sup> All these views presuppose that Jesus (Jn) is working with the same categories as the Jews and shares their understanding of the Law. When this false presupposition is done away with, not only are such misunderstandings avoided, but two explanations, which are proposed as distinct, fall into one. They are: 1) we are dealing with a general accusation—the Jews do not keep the Law because they fail to grasp its true meaning and purpose;<sup>33</sup> 2) the Jews do not keep the Law because they seek to kill Jesus.<sup>34</sup> The two fall into one because the failure of the Jews to grasp the true meaning and purpose of the Law manifests itself in their very desire to kill Jesus. Whereas, in the eyes of the Jews, the Law demands that Jesus be put to death, in the eyes of Jn (Jesus) it should lead to the recognition of his "teaching" (viz., of his person) (vv. 14-18) and of his "work" (vv. 21-23) as having their origin in God.

Although the Jews deny any intent to kill Jesus (v. 20), the reader recalls Jn 5,16,18 where it is stated that the Jews sought to kill him because "he was in the habit of doing such things on the Sabbath" (misunderstanding of Jesus' "work") and even more so because "he called God his Father, making himself equal to God" (misunderstanding of Jesus' teaching-revelation and of his person).

The sequence (vv. 21-23) speaks precisely of the healing of the paralytic (Jn 5,1-15). The event is singled out by Jn (already in chapter 5 and now once again) as typifying not only all the "works" performed so far by Jesus on the Sabbath, but his "works" in general and his whole salvific "work".

The whole "work" of Jesus (word and deed) is misunderstood by the Jews; their inadequate understanding of the Law blinds them to the true nature of Jesus and his work and its true relationship to the Law (and vice versa: their lack of faith in Jesus does not allow them to achieve a correct understanding of the Law and to appreciate the manner in which Jesus fulfills it).

We are in the presence of two different interpretations of the Law; the Law is apparently not quite the same entity for Jn and for the Jews. For the Jews the Law is against Jesus, it demands his death; for Jn it should lead to accept Jesus—to kill him is to go against the Law. *"To do the Law" is to believe. To murder the one to whom the*

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<sup>32</sup> Brown, 316.

<sup>33</sup> Westcott, Lagrange, Bultmann (208, n. 12), Schlatter.

<sup>34</sup> W. Bauer, Brown, Barrett, Hoskyns, Lightfoot.

*Law pointed and who came to fulfill the Law, is to go against the Law itself.*

Jn 7,50f explains more explicitly why the condemnation of Jesus goes against the Law.

## 2. JN 7,51

The context of Jn 7,51 has already been considered.<sup>35</sup> For the Pharisees the Law discredits Jesus. Knowledge of the Law has prevented the leaders and Pharisees from being "led astray" by him; ignorance of the Law has made the עַם הָאָרֶץ an easy prey for his false teaching. False teacher and followers alike fall under the curse of the Law.

At this point, Nicodemus, one of their number, objects that the Pharisees themselves are ignoring the Law, which demands that a man be heard and what he does discovered before he is judged.

### A) *The words of Nicodemus*

For Jn what do the words of Nicodemus mean? Most commentaries have precious little or nothing at all to say about v. 51.<sup>36</sup> Exceptionally, some point out that the Pharisees, who attribute such importance to and take such pride in the Law, who curse the common people and despise them because of their ignorance of the Law, are themselves showing ignorance of and disloyalty to the Law.<sup>37</sup> Such a view is no doubt accurate. We *are* in the presence of another instance of Johannine irony, but what is the legal principle which the Pharisees are disregarding? The commentaries invariably adduce the following texts from the OT: Ex 23,1; Dt 1,16f; 17,4. Some refer to Ex R 21,3; *Bell. Jud.* I, 209; *Ant.* XIV, 167; to which we can add: Dan Sus LXX 51 (=θ' 48).

The Pharisees would be going against the principle set forth in these texts in either of two ways: 1) because they have sent to arrest

<sup>35</sup> See above, pp. 87ff; 101ff.

<sup>36</sup> One turns in vain to Westcott, W. Bauer, Lightfoot, or even to more recent commentaries (Dodd, Barrett, Brown, Schulz) for an enlightening comment.

<sup>37</sup> Of the authors consulted (W. Bauer, Westcott, Loisy, Lagrange, Lightfoot, Bernard, Hoskyns, Dodd, Barrett, Bultmann, Schlatter, Brown, Schnackenburg, Schulz), only Hoskyns, Loisy and R. Schnackenburg (*Das Johannesevangelium* (Freiburg i. Br., 1965-71) ad loc.) mention this.

Jesus without having heard him first;<sup>38</sup> 2) because they are "judging" or "condemning" him without a previous "hearing".<sup>39</sup>

The first opinion is unacceptable. 1) There is no reference in the words of Nicodemus to Jesus' arrest, there is only a reference to his being "judged" (condemned). "To arrest" and "to condemn" are not synonymous. 2) Although the juridical grounds for the arrest are not mentioned explicitly by the Fourth Gospel (or by the Synoptics), there were sufficient grounds for the arrest,<sup>40</sup> in particular the violation(s) of the Sabbath and the blasphemous claims made by Jesus (5,16ff). 3) The arrest of Jesus was ordained to his being tried and the hearing would naturally have followed his arrest.<sup>41</sup>

The second opinion has a better basis. The Pharisees would be pronouncing a condemnatory judgement upon a man without a "hearing". A judicial verdict must be preceded, according to the Law of Moses,<sup>42</sup> by a regular trial or hearing. Nicodemus is therefore inviting the Pharisees to respect the stipulation of "their" Law.

In support of this interpretation some authors have even maintained that the ἀκούειν παρ' αὐτοῦ (7,51) is a classical expression for hearing a man in his own defence.<sup>43</sup>

The explanation is apparently very straightforward and lucid, but a closer scrutiny reveals serious inadequacies. Jn 7,45ff contains no

<sup>38</sup> Hoskyns, Loisy, Lagrange.

<sup>39</sup> Bultmann, Lagrange. Bernard speaks of "the intended procedure".

<sup>40</sup> On the "legality" of Jesus' arrest, cf. Blinzler, *Prozess*, 86.

<sup>41</sup> Blinzler, *ibid.*, 82-83. Lagrange's supposition, according to which the Pharisees do not dare say: "We will arrest him first and hear him later" because they have already indicated that his condemnation is a settled matter, is a fanciful piece of "psychologizing".

<sup>42</sup> The νόμος of Jn 7,51 is obviously the Jewish Law; Nicodemus speaks of "our Law". This rules out any reference such as that contained in Act 25,16. The personification of the Torah is common in Rabbinic literature. Schlatter (ad loc.) quotes some examples from Josephus. For an example from the NT, cf. Rom 3,19 (comp. Gal 3,8).

<sup>43</sup> Field and Barrett (ad Jn 7,51) point out that ἀκούειν παρὰ τινος has the meaning of "hearing someone in his own defence" in classical Greek. BAG (sub voce ἀκούω 2.) quotes Xenophon (*Hell.* 1,7,9 al) as well as a few papyri (PAmh 135, 14; Pland 9,10; 15; POxy 1032, 59), considers the expression a legal technical term and lists Jn 7,51 as such. However, ἀκούειν παρὰ is used by Jn in other passages which allow no such interpretation (cf. especially 6,45, but also: 1,40; 8,26.38.40; 15,15) and ἀκούειν παρὰ τινος, even in classical Greek, need not have a technical legal sense. Even if Jn were using the expression in this sense at 7,51 (which seems doubtful), this would not go against the interpretation we propose for, on the first level of meaning, Nicodemus (Jn) is recalling a legal precept.

allusion to a formal "judicial" sentence being pronounced. All that may be said is that such a sentence would be contained *in nuce* in the condemnatory judgement of the Pharisees, voiced in vv. 45ff. But would Jn, in this case, be requesting that a formal hearing be held and that Jesus be given a fair trial before being sentenced?

The strange thing is that, strictly speaking, no official "sentencing" of Jesus by the Council is to be found in the Fourth Gospel. The closest we ever come to such a sentence is in Jn 11,47-53, but one can hardly speak of a formal sentence being pronounced upon Jesus by an official gathering of the Council, such as that found in the accounts Mt and Mk give of the trial before Caiaphas.

This goes hand in hand with the fact that Jn does not report an official "hearing" or "trial" of Jesus by the Jews. Jn is the only one of the evangelists who omits the "hearing" before Caiaphas.<sup>44</sup> The closest we ever come to an official hearing such as that recorded by the Synoptics is at Jn 11,47-53. The hearing before Annas (Jn 18,19-23) is not meant to be understood as an official hearing.

From this one might be tempted to draw the conclusion that Jn's purpose was to show that Jesus was condemned without a fair trial, that he was not given the "hearing" the Law demanded. However, the point the evangelist wishes to make is not that Jesus is condemned without a fair trial, but that the trial or "hearing" of Jesus and the ensuing verdict run parallel to his whole public ministry. An official hearing before a Jewish tribunal would be a useless repetition and would go against the intention of Jn, who wished to present judgement as a direct result of revelation and Jesus as revealing himself to the Jews in unequivocal terms throughout his public ministry.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> See what has been said above, pp. 64ff.

<sup>45</sup> That such was the intention of Jn is apparent from the episode of Jesus before Annas, which acts as a sort of substitute for the hearing before Caiaphas (see above, pp. 66-69). For Hahn the hearing before Annas would be an "official" hearing (*art. cit.*, 65) which, however, would have been deprived of the characteristic traits of a Jewish trial (*ibid.*, 67). In our opinion the hearing is "unofficial" not only from the point of view of form. The intention of Jn is not to show that Jesus, as required by Nicodemus at 7,51, is given the possibility of defending himself "in einem förmlichen 'Anhörverfahren'" (so Hahn). The hearing, as Hahn admits, is not "förmlich" at all. It only serves to show that a formal hearing is no longer necessary (cf. Bultmann, ad Jn 18,21). Hahn insists on viewing the trial before Pilate as the "true" trial of Jesus by the Jews ("vor dem heidnischen Richter führen die Juden ihren eigenen Prozess gegen Jesus", *art. cit.*, 39; cf. also 85) and believes that the trial before Pilate is the

Jn 7,51 indeed demands that Jesus be "heard", but it is not a judicial "hearing" which the evangelist has in mind. Were this the case, it would be surprising that he does not mention a violation of the Law which is even more flagrant: that which consists in condemning a man without specific grounds for his condemnation having been brought against him by at least two witnesses (Num 35,30 etc.). Jn knows this prescription of the Law (cf. Jn 8,17), but here (and in the rest of the Gospel) he shows no interest whatsoever in this aspect of the question. Rather than ask that at least two witnesses be called and heard, he asks that the defendant himself be "heard". The request is very strange indeed! No witnesses have come forth to accuse Jesus and Nicodemus demands that *Jesus* be heard. The evangelist would be requesting that the case be made to rest on the sole testimony of Jesus, the accused! According to sound OT doctrine, of which Nicodemus could hardly be unaware, no capital case can rest on the testimony of one person;<sup>46</sup> moreover, according to Rabbinical legal practice,<sup>47</sup> no man may testify on his own behalf (Jn 8,13:; comp. 5,31).

It is rather odd that the commentaries should adduce OT texts which, in ultimate analysis, are of no assistance in understanding Jn 7,51. Dt 17,4f refers to "hearing" about some violation of the Law and stresses that such a matter be investigated before being judged; Dt 17,6; 19,15 enunciate the principle that a man should be condemned only on the testimony of two (or more) witnesses;

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"eigentlicher Prozess" in the Fourth Gospel. J. Blank ("Die Verhandlung vor Pilatus, Joh 18,28-19,16 im Lichte johanneischer Theologie", *BZ* 3 (1959) 60-81), (following E. Peterson), and I. de la Potterie ("Jésus roi et juge d'après Jn 19,13", *Bið* 41 (1960) 217-247) have shown that the trial before Pilate brings the confrontation between Jesus and the Jews to its conclusion. We are in complete agreement with this and believe that the view of Bultmann and Schlier, which sees in the trial before Pilate a confrontation between Jesus and the State, is not in harmony with the outlook of the Fourth Gospel. But it is equally erroneous to hold that the juridical confrontation between Jesus and the Jews in the Book of Signs (which Hahn has so carefully worked out) is but a "Vorbereitung" for the "eigentlicher Prozess der Juden gegen Jesus", which takes place before Pilate. The "true trial" of the Jews vs. Jesus takes place during the public ministry and the trial before Pilate is but the "dénouement" of what has already taken place.

<sup>46</sup> The texts quoted by the commentaries to illustrate the unlawfulness of the procedure of the Pharisees turn against the very proposal of Nicodemus, the defender of the Law!

<sup>47</sup> *Str.-Bill.*, II, 522 (on Jn 8,12) quote Rosh-Ha-Shanah 31,1 and Kethuboth 27<sup>b</sup>.

Ex 23,1 is practically irrelevant; Dt 1,16 speaks, in general terms, about hearing the case and judging righteously between a man and his brother—both sides of the case must be heard; Dt 19,16f states the same principle.

Such texts would be very pertinent had Jn demanded that witnesses be heard for the prosecution and for the defence (the defendant could, of course, also speak in his defence), but Jn is demanding something quite different: that the accused, and only the accused, be heard.

The only texts of those quoted which speak of "hearing" the accused are Dt 1,16 and Dt 19,16f. Yet, the principle laid down here is that both sides be heard, not that the accused be heard (this is prescribed only insofar as it is demanded by the principle that both sides be heard). The remaining texts have a very loose relationship to Jn 7,51. At most, they may be quoted because they speak of the necessity of "hearing" before judging. One must conclude that the procedure Nicodemus advocates in the name of the Law can be explained, strictly speaking, by none of these texts.<sup>48</sup>

The most notable deficiency found in the explanation given by the commentators is that all the texts invoked to illustrate the legal maxim to which Jn is referring are relevant (with reservations) to the first part of the verse only. It is as if Nicodemus had said, "Does our Law judge (condemn) a man without first hearing him?" rather than, "Does our Law judge (condemn) a man without first hearing him *and coming to know what he does*?" About these last words, which are presented as an integral part of the requirements of the Law, nothing is said, no reference given. The embarrassment (if it is at all felt) is understandable: to our knowledge there is no legal precept in the OT (or Rabbinism) which demands that a *double condition* be met before judging: that the accused be heard and that one come to know what he does.<sup>49</sup> We search in vain for a precept similar to that enunciated at Jn 7,51 and referred to by Nicodemus as a well known

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<sup>48</sup> The text which offers the most interesting parallel to Jn 7,51 (but only insofar as the "hearing" is concerned) is Ex R 23,1 (cf. Schlatter, ad Jn 7,51): "Flesh and blood, if they hear the words of a man (can) pass judgement on him, if they do not hear, they cannot establish judgement upon him". One can also comp. Act 25,16 for Roman legal procedure—the accused is confronted with his accusers and allowed to defend himself.

<sup>49</sup> Dt 17,4 speaks of investigating whether a crime has taken place or not, but such an investigation, in the ancient world, was limited to the hearing of witnesses.

and recognized legal principle.<sup>50</sup> This may be an indication that Jn 7,51 is not primarily a *plaidoyer* in favour of correct legal procedure.

Basing our investigation on the terminology used here and on some neuralgic points of Johannine theology we believe it possible to show that the interest of the evangelist lies elsewhere and that the legal principle which is behind the words of Nicodemus (viz., a man must be judged only after the hearing of witnesses has taken place) has been forced to serve the writer's purpose. If we recall the two modalities of revelation in Jn ("word" and "works") it seems obvious that the evangelist, although using a formula which would be quite proper when speaking about the *general* requirements of legal procedure (viz., a man must be judged only after a hearing has taken place and what he has done has thereby been ascertained), did not posit two conditions (viz., did not add the second condition) without a purpose.

If the Law is to be respected two conditions must be met: 1) the Pharisees must hear Jesus; 2) they must come to know what he does. The terms used by Jn are particularly revealing. They are: ἀκούειν παρ' αὐτοῦ and γινώσκειν τί ποιεῖ.

#### B) 'Ακούειν (παρ' αὐτοῦ)

Kittel distinguishes two meanings in the NT usage of the verb ἀκούειν:<sup>51</sup> "physical hearing" and "hearing" in the "true" sense of the word. In this last sense, as both Kittel and Bultmann rightly maintain, ἀκούειν is synonymous with πιστεύειν.<sup>52</sup>

In his article on ἀκούειν, Kittel refrains from considering the relationship of ἀκούειν to πιστεύειν.<sup>53</sup> The relationship is not quite so simple as it first appears and one notices a slight difference between the Johannine use and that of other NT writers.

If we abstract for a moment from Jn, the NT does not seem to affirm *explicitly* "that it is only through πιστεύειν that ἀκούειν

<sup>50</sup> One can, of course, object that witnesses are heard in order to establish what the accused has done; the fact remains that there is no legal principle which posits this condition. It is furthermore noteworthy that Jn writes γινῶ τί ποιεῖ and not γινῶ τί ἐποίησεν as should be the case, were a legal maxim being invoked. Jn is thinking of Jesus and his ποιεῖν.

<sup>51</sup> *TWNT* I, art. ἀκούω, 220-221.

<sup>52</sup> Bultmann, *TWNT* I, art. γινώσκω, 713; 9f; VI, art. πιστεύω, 224, 43; Kittel, *TWNT* I, 220f; IV, 120.

<sup>53</sup> Kittel, *TWNT* I, 221, 2f.

attains its object".<sup>54</sup> In the texts quoted by Kittel to illustrate this fact,<sup>55</sup> the ἀκούειν of the "word" precedes the πιστεύειν and, although both are undeniably related, there is no reason to believe that ἀκούειν has the sense of "believing" or that the "hearing" presupposes faith. What is here given is rather an illustration of the "message" having to be heard before one can believe. This genetic view of faith is most clearly expressed in Rom 10,14-17.

The NT (outside of Jn) most often takes ἀκούειν as the "physical" act of hearing—without implying nor excluding faith. Such texts as Mt 13,23; 15,10; Mk 4,12; 7,14; Lk 8,10; Act 28,26; Rom 15,21; clearly distinguish between "hearing" (ἀκούειν) and "understanding" (συνιέναι). The same thought is found in Heb 3,7-8.15 and, even more explicitly, in Heb 4,2—where the "message" is "heard" but not accepted in faith. What can be affirmed with certitude is that, in some cases, ἀκούειν implies more than simple physical audition (e.g., Mk 6,11, Par; 9,7, Par; Lk 6,47; 8,21; 10,16; 11,28; 16,29-31). More convincing evidence of this can be gathered from the frequent saying of Jesus, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear"<sup>56</sup> or, even more clearly, from the use the early Church made of Is 6,9-10<sup>57</sup> and of Is 29,10.<sup>58</sup> Here we are obviously dealing with a "hearing" which goes beyond simple "physical" perception of the "word".

Jn distinguishes much more neatly between "hearing" and "hearing", between physical audition and the spiritual perception of the "word" in faith. Ἀκούειν in Jn has a double meaning.<sup>59</sup> It is found used in the sense of "physical" perception when used with a "profane" object<sup>60</sup> and even when it has the word (voice) of Jesus as object.<sup>61</sup> But the surprising thing in Jn is that ἀκούειν is very frequently given a deeper

<sup>54</sup> Kittel, *TWNT* IV, 120, 27: "erst durch das πιστεύειν (kommt) das ἀκούειν zum Ziel".

<sup>55</sup> The texts are: Act 4,4; 13,48; 15,7; 1 Thess 2,13; Eph 1,14; cf. *TWNT* IV, 120.

<sup>56</sup> Mk 4,9.23; 7,16; Mt 11,15; Lk 8,8; 14,35; etc.

<sup>57</sup> Mt 13,14-15; Mk 8,18; Act 28,26-27. Cf. J. Gnilka, *Die Verstockung Israels. Is VI, 9f. in der Theologie der Synoptiker* (München, 1961).

<sup>58</sup> Mt 13,13-14; Rom 11,8.

<sup>59</sup> This has already been pointed out by Bultmann (Comm., on Jn 5,25 and 6,60). On the equivalence ἀκούειν — πιστεύειν in Jn, cf. Bultmann, *Theologie des neuen Testaments* (Tübingen, 1965), 422-425.

<sup>60</sup> Jn 4,1.47; 7,32; 9,35.40; 11,20.29; etc.

<sup>61</sup> Jn 5,25a.28; 6,60a; 7,40; 9,27a (words of the man born blind testifying to Jesus); 10,20 (?).



meaning (i.e., to accept the word, to hear the word in its true, profound sense) and is *explicitly* identified with faith.<sup>62</sup>

Let us look briefly at what is implied in some of these texts. When the disciples say, "Who can hear this word?" they are not referring to "physical" hearing (Jn 6,60a). The same applies to the words of Jesus: οὐ δύνασθε ἀκούειν τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐμὸν (Jn 8,43; comp. 5,37). The same point of view is found in those texts in which the evangelist affirms that, in order to hear, one must be ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας (Jn 8,47; 18,37) or, negatively, that being ἐκ τοῦ διαβόλου, not being ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, renders "hearing" impossible (Jn 8,43.47). Ἀκούειν, therefore, is more than the "physical" perception of "words". We may speak of a "spiritual hearing" (a "hearing" which is not possible outside of faith) required by the very nature of the "word". To bring out the "revelatory" nature of the "word" (and therefore the "spiritual" nature of the "hearing" this word demands), Jn has recourse to the metaphor of Jesus "speaking" (λαλεῖν) what he has "heard" with the Father—revealing to man what he, being "of this world" and "from below", could never discover if it were not communicated to him by the Son, who alone has seen God. Jn goes further than the other NT writers when he *explicitly* equates ἀκούειν and πιστεύειν.<sup>63</sup>

The best example of this is Jn 10,26-27 :

ὕμεῖς οὐ πιστεύετε, ὅτι οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐκ τῶν προβάτων τῶν ἐμῶν  
τὰ πρόβατα τὰ ἐμὰ τῆς φωνῆς μου ἀκούουσιν

The parallelism and the chiasmic construction equate "hearing Jesus' voice" and "believing". The whole allegory of the sheep and the shepherd is there to make this point and there are other passages in Jn where ἀκούειν and πιστεύειν are used interchangeably or in close association with each other.<sup>64</sup>

The equivalence between ἀκούειν (in the deeper sense) and πιστεύειν in Jn does not mean that the terms do not retain certain proper

<sup>62</sup> Jn 4,42; 5,24.25b.37; 6,45.60b; 8,43.47; 9,27b; 10,3.8; 12,47; 14,24; 16,27; 18,21.37. Jn 9,27b; 18,21 and 18,37 probably have two levels of meaning.

<sup>63</sup> We found no other example of this in the NT. In Jn the examples can be multiplied.

<sup>64</sup> Of the texts mentioned in note 62, cf., for example, Jn 4,42; 5,24.37; 6,60 (with 6,64); 12,46-48. At Jn 8,31-47 πιστεύειν and ἀκούειν are used interchangeably.

nuances. It is significant that Jn very rarely uses *πιστεύειν* with the "word" as its object;<sup>65</sup> the object of *πιστεύειν* is almost always Jesus (or the Father). Conversely, Jn very rarely speaks of "hearing" Jesus.<sup>66</sup> The reason is not to be sought in a basic difference of meaning between *ἀκούειν*, when used in the "deeper" sense, and *πιστεύειν*, but rather in the fact that the *λόγος* in Jn is not identified with the person of Jesus except in the Prologue.<sup>67</sup> Given this distinction, it is only natural that "believing" should be reserved for the person of Jesus (the Father), "hearing" for his "word". This does not imply that true "hearing" does not involve faith—*ἀκούειν* has the word of revelation as its object and, in ultimate analysis, Jesus and his word are identical. The faith "hearing" demands, however, is faith in Jesus. Faith is no doubt related to the "word", is demanded by the "word", comes to be through the "word", but the proper object of faith for Jn is the person of Jesus. Jn maintains this distinction, speaks of one coming to believe *διὰ τοῦ λόγου*<sup>68</sup> and bases faith in Jesus on his "word" (hearing) and "works" (seeing), even though both "seeing" and "hearing" themselves are the expression of faith.

We may now return to Jn 7,51. In the light of the Johannine usage, *ἀκούειν* in our verse could have either the meaning of "hearing" in the ordinary sense of "physical audition" or that of "hearing" in the deeper, "spiritual" sense which involves faith. If the words of Nicodemus are taken simply as the statement of a general legal principle (that a man must be heard before being judged), it is obvious that this first meaning is appropriate. The commentaries interpret in this sense.<sup>69</sup>

The idea of "physical" audition is certainly not to be excluded. We mentioned that the legal principle behind the words of Nicodemus refers to the necessity of giving a man a hearing before judging him.

<sup>65</sup> There are only four instances: 2,22; 4,50 (*λόγος*); 5,47 (*ρήματα*); 12,38 (*ἀκοή*, in an OT quotation).

<sup>66</sup> Only at 4,42 (?) and 10,20 (where we are probably dealing with "hearing" in the profane sense). Jn 6,61 is not an exception; the *αὐτοῦ* refers to *λόγος*.

<sup>67</sup> Jn never uses *λόγος* or *ρήματα* absolutely, but writes: *λόγος, ρήματα, μου, σοῦ, αὐτοῦ, τοῦ θεοῦ, τοῦ πατρὸς* etc. On the significance of this, cf. Kittel, *TWNT* IV, 131, 19ff.

<sup>68</sup> Jn 4,39.41.42; 17,20. Cf. further Jn 8,30; 20,31.

<sup>69</sup> Bultmann, for instance, accuses the Pharisees of not wanting to hold a hearing because they have already made up their mind and are not disposed "zur Sachlichkeit", to be objective.

But, in our estimation, to interpret these words as *plaidoyer* in favour of giving Jesus a judicial hearing (or in the sense that the Pharisees are being asked to listen to what Jesus has to say) does not do justice to the intention of the evangelist. It means to overlook the very important fact that the general legal principle is being applied to a specific case: the “judgement” (condemnation) of Jesus by the Pharisees (“Jews”).<sup>70</sup> The moment in which due consideration is given to this aspect of the matter, ἀκούειν demands that it be given the deeper meaning of “hearing in faith”.

Jesus is accused of being a violator of the Sabbath (Jn 5,16.18) and a false teacher (Jn 7,14-18; comp. 9,28-39). What would Jesus have to answer to these charges? He could merely repeat what he has already said: he works on the Sabbath even as the Father does because he is one with him (Jn 5,17.19ff), his Sabbath activity fulfills the Law (Jn 7,21-23); his teaching is “of God”, it is revelation, because he is ἀληθής (Jn 7,16-18), because, being from above, he speaks τὴν ἀλήθειαν (Jn 8,23.28), and so forth. But the very words Jesus has spoken and would now have to repeat is incriminating evidence! Far from exonerating him, it is what Jesus “speaks”, what he has to say on his own behalf, more than what he has done, which condemns him in the eyes of the Pharisees (Jn 10,32-33: the charge of blasphemy; Jn 7,46-49: the charge of false teaching!).

The judgement of the Pharisees is unjust because the Pharisees have refused to “hear” (ἀκούειν). If what Jesus speaks is to prove the justice of his cause, the “hearing” which is required is not “physical audition”. Jn certainly does not wish to imply that the Pharisees have not “heard” Jesus in this sense.<sup>71</sup> At Jn 7,47-49 they

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<sup>70</sup> The use of the article at 7,51 μὴ ὁ νόμος ἡμῶν κρίνει τὸν ἄνθρωπον κ.τ.λ.) may be further evidence that Jn is thinking specifically of Jesus, but the evidence is not conclusive in view of Jn 2,25 and 7,23, where ἄνθρωπος with the article is used to indicate “man” in general.

<sup>71</sup> The “argumentum ex silentio” that the Pharisees “de facto” are not said to have heard Jesus (in the “physical” sense) before 8,12f should not be pressed. The term Φαρισαῖος is used only three times before the great conflict recorded in Jn 7 and in which the Pharisees are presented as acting “behind the scenes”. The term only becomes current beginning with ch. 7. In view of this it seems oversubtle to hold that Jn avoided having the Pharisees “hear” Jesus before 7,51 in order to allow Nicodemus to make his plea. That the Pharisees are not singled out “nominatim” among the hearers of Jesus in Jn 1-7 does not mean that they are not subsumed under the broader term Ἰουδαῖος. Jn is furthermore asking the Pharisees (according to the commentaries) to

are presented as being very well informed about Jesus and his διδασχή. They have not believed on him because he is a πλάνος, not because they are poorly informed about or have never heard what he has to say.

The High Priests and Pharisees are the representatives of orthodox Judaism and the "Jews" (in the negative sense) are characterized by the evangelist as those who, not being "of God", are unable to "hear" Jesus' word :

Jn 8,43 : διὰ τί τὴν λαλιὰν τὴν ἐμὴν οὐ γινώσκετε ;  
ὅτι οὐ δύνασθε ἀκούειν τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐμόν.

Jn 8,47 : ὁ ὧν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ῥήματα τοῦ θεοῦ ἀκούει .  
διὰ τοῦτο ὑμεῖς οὐκ ἀκούετε, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἐστέ.

It would mean to do an injustice to the subtle innuendoes of which Jn is capable and to his theological outlook were one to limit the meaning of ἀκούειν at 7,51 and refuse to give it the meaning it has at 8,43.47 and elsewhere in the Gospel. If the "hearing" of Jesus is set down as a prerequisite for pronouncing judgement upon him, in the Fourth Gospel this can only mean that no judgement can be pronounced upon Jesus unless his "word" be first accepted in faith.<sup>72</sup>

Such an interpretation is also supported by the immediate context. We have seen that the servants at Jn 7,45-49, because they have been impressed by Jesus' λαλεῖν, are associated by the Pharisees (vv. 47-49) with the **הַאֲרָמִים** which has believed on Jesus (πιστεύειν εἰς αὐτόν). For the Pharisees, to give Jesus a "hearing" such as that

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hold a "formal" hearing—which makes the question as to whether they heard Jesus expose his doctrine as the other Jews had or not rather irrelevant. As a body the Pharisees represent the "Jews" (orthodox Judaism)—they know only too well (or think they do) what Jesus has said and done.

<sup>72</sup> The κρίνειν of our verse has a certain ambivalence. As the enunciation of a legal principle, v. 51 should be translated : "Does our Law 'judge' (not : 'condemn') a man without ..." Even in the application made by Nicodemus the sense of κρίνειν remains that of "judging" (not : "condemning"). Jn is affirming that the Pharisees or the Jews cannot allow themselves a judgement upon Jesus without having heard him. This means that, if they do judge him without hearing him (in faith !), their judgement will necessarily be unjust (κατ' ὄψιν—7,24 ; κατὰ τὴν σάρκα—8,15)—they will condemn where they should pronounce a favourable judgement (τὴν δικαίαν κρίσιν—7,24). The judgement of Jesus outside of faith is abusive and inevitably results in condemnation. This is, in fact, what has happened at 7,47-49 and, in this respect, κρίνειν, referring to the judgement the Pharisees have already passed upon Jesus, takes on the sense of "to condemn".

given to him by the "people of the land" and such as, they fear, has been given to him by their servants, to believe on him, is to be "led astray" (*πλανᾶσθαι*). They take pride in affirming that not one of their number or of the High Priests has believed on Jesus (i.e., has "heard" him in the true sense of the word). At 7,51, Jn is ironically suggesting that the Pharisees are thereby going against the Law. Jesus must be "heard" and the very nature of the "word" Jesus speaks, of his "language" (*λαλιά*—8,43), makes it necessary that they do what the *עם הארץ* has done—if they are to respect the Law!

### C) *Γινώσκειν τί ποιεῖν*

The second part of v. 51, we have said, is virtually ignored by the commentaries, perhaps because no texts to which Nicodemus would be referring can be adduced or perhaps because the meaning seems perfectly obvious: one must come to know (*γινώσκειν*) what a man has done—does (*ποιεῖν*) before judging him. It is what we describe, in modern jargon, as "getting to know the facts of the case". The Pharisees would be thrusting aside correct legal procedure because they "judge" Jesus without knowing the facts. Once again we must ask: when the general principle is applied to Jesus, is such a superficial explanation satisfactory?

*Γινώσκειν* and *ποιεῖν* belong to the Johannine vocabulary and play an important role in the theological structure of the Fourth Gospel. The suspicion thus arises that "coming to know what Jesus does" might, like "hearing him", have a deeper meaning than at first appears.

#### a) *Γινώσκειν*

*Γινώσκειν* in Jn has retained the meaning it has in classical Greek. It is used to designate the acquisition of knowledge and may be rendered by "to come to know", "to recognize", "to come to understand". *Εἰδέναι* on the contrary is used to indicate "absolute knowledge", knowledge as possessed: "to know all about" something.<sup>73</sup> Jesus is the subject of *γινώσκειν* at 1,49; 2,24-25; 4,1; 5,6.42; 6,15; 10,14.15.27; 16,19; 17,25. What is characteristic of these passages is that (except for 10,15 and 17,25) this knowledge of Jesus never has

<sup>73</sup> Cf. I. de la Potterie, *art. cit.*, *Bib* 40 (1959) 709-725.

anything to do with the *ἐπουράνια* (knowledge Jesus has of the Father, of his origin, of what he has seen and heard with the Father, etc.).

Used in this way, the verb is reserved for the disciples and for the "world" (the "Jews"). The divergence of usage is to be explained by the very nature of the verb, which implies the gradual discovery or acquisition of knowledge. Jesus' knowledge of the Father, etc., is "absolute" and is expressed by *εἰδέναι*.

What Jesus knows with a knowledge firmly possessed becomes for the disciples and (does not become) for the "world" the object of discovery. *Γινώσκειν* is used with the disciples or the "world" as subject to designate the "coming to know" or "not coming to know" about the person of Jesus and what he reveals.

*The disciples.* What the disciples "come to know" is always Jesus' person, his relationship to the Father, or the Father himself (in Jesus) : 6,69; 10,14; 12,16; 14,7.9.17.20; 17,3.7.8.25. At 8,32 the Jews are told they will come to know *τὴν ἀλήθειαν* (the revelation Jesus brings) by becoming true disciples. The same thought is present at Jn 7,17. At 13,7.12.28 it is the meaning of the symbolic act of Jesus (the washing of the feet), at 15,18 the fact that the world has hated Jesus which are the object of *γινώσκειν*.

With the disciples as subject *γινώσκειν* is always used in *positive* sentences.

*The "world" ("Jews").* Here the verb has as object : the person of Jesus—his origin, unity with the Father (1,10; 7,26.27), his mission (10,38; 17,23), his words, his *λαλεῖν* (3,10; 8,27.43; 10,6); Jesus and the Father (16,3); God (8,55); the Father (17,25); the Spirit (14,17).

In all these cases the verb is used in *negative* sentences.<sup>74</sup>

Coming to know (*γινώσκειν*) Jesus and what he reveals is the privilege of the disciples, the "world" cannot share in this knowledge. *Γινώσκειν* has a "positive" meaning, it is closely associated with faith.

There are only three texts which create some difficulty : Jn 14,31; 17,23 and 8,28. The first two speak of the "world" coming to know (*γινώσκειν*) the love of Jesus for the Father, and that the Father has sent him. Rather than give *γινώσκειν* a sense it does not have elsewhere in the Gospel ("knowledge" which does not imply faith and which leads to the realization of being on the side of untruth), it is

<sup>74</sup> Jn 7,26 clearly implies a negative answer.

preferable to stress that the *γινώσκειν* of the world <sup>75</sup> is presented in the form of something which Jesus wishes to see come about and presupposes, on the one hand, that it is not, on the other, that it might come to be (which does not mean that it *will* one day be). Jn 8,28 is more difficult. We believe, with Thüsing,<sup>76</sup> that one must understand: "When you have lifted up the Son of man, *if you believe* you will come to know that I am he". Again it is only the possibility which is posited. Not only is "knowledge" inseparable from faith, it flows from faith and is its consummation.<sup>77</sup> At Jn 6,69 *πιστεύειν* precedes *γινώσκειν*; "remaining in the word" precedes "coming to know" at 8,32 (cf. 15,7-8); believing in the "works" will lead to "coming to know" that the Father is in Jesus and Jesus in the Father at 10,38. That knowledge flows from faith, *γινώσκειν* from *πιστεύειν*, and is its consummation is made clear at 6,47 and 17,13: one must "believe" *in order to* "have life", but "knowing" God and the one he sent *is* eternal life.

b) *Τί ποιεῖν*

The first thing which strikes one when considering the use of *ποιεῖν* in Jn is its christological overtones. Jesus is the subject of this verb in the overwhelming majority of cases.<sup>78</sup> With Jesus as subject, we may say that *ποιεῖν* designates the salvific activity of the Word made flesh.<sup>79</sup> That Jesus' *ποιεῖν* is a designation for his salvific work results from the object of his *ποιεῖν*.

<sup>75</sup> *Κόσμος* here would have the "neutral" sense of "mankind" or the "positive" sense of the "world" God loves (Jn 3,16).

<sup>76</sup> *Erhöhung*, 16-17.

<sup>77</sup> On the relationship of *πιστεύειν* to *γινώσκειν* cf. Bultmann, *TWNT* I, 713; *Theologie*, 425f (where a slightly different point of view is adopted).

<sup>78</sup> 63 × (65 if 15,15 and 19,12 are taken as having Jesus as implicit subject). In six additional cases we have the opposition: none can do ... what Jesus does (3,2; 7,31; 9,16; 10,41; 15,5.24). Only 3 × is the Father subject (5,19(bis).20). In all three cases it is stated that the Son does what the Father does. As for the *ποιεῖν* of the disciples (13,5.16; 14,12(bis); 15,14), it is dependent upon that of Jesus.

<sup>79</sup> There are only two instances in which Jesus' *ποιεῖν* has a "profane" object (2,15.18). The kneading of the mud (9,6.11.14) is within the context of a *σημεῖον*; 13,12 refers to an act which symbolizes his whole ministry; 18,35 has *ἐποίησεν* embrace the whole mission of Jesus, as his answer shows; 18,30 is a flagrant perversion of the truth by the Jews.

aa) *Σημεῖα*

We find the word *σημεῖα* as object of Jesus' *ποιεῖν* at 2,11.23; 3,2b; 4,54; 6,2.14.30; 7,31b; 11,47; 12,18.37; 20,30. In the following cases *σημεῖα* is object, although the word is *absent*: 4,45.46; 5,11.15.16; 6,6; 7,23; 9,26; 11,37.45.46. At 3,2a; 7,31a and 9,16 *σημεῖα* is object of *ποιεῖν*, but Jesus' activity is only implicitly referred to.

bb) \* *Ἔργα* (*ἔργον*)

We find the word *ἔργα* (*ἔργον*) as object of Jesus' *ποιεῖν* at: 5,36; 7,3.4.21; 10,37.38; 14,12; 15,24; 17,4. To these 14,10 should be added since it is said that the Father does the *ἔργα* in Jesus. In 5,20 the *ἔργα* are "shown" to the Son in order that he too do them even as the Father does. Only in two cases do we have *ποιεῖν* used with the singular *ἔργον*: 7,21; 17,4. The first case need not detain us. It is equivalent to *ἔργα* (*σημεῖα*) and refers to a specific "work" (the healing of the paralytic). At 17,4 *ἔργον* embraces the whole mission of revelation given to Jesus by the Father to accomplish: his words and works (cf. 4,34). *To come to know what Jesus "does"*, judging from these texts, *means to come to know his σημεῖα and ἔργα*.

cc) *Σημεῖα* (*ἔργα*) and faith

The fact that Jn uses the term *σημεῖα* and avoids the term *δυνάμεις* is significant. In Jn "miracles" are seen as "signs" which lead to the question concerning the person or identity of him who works them.<sup>80</sup> On the other hand, if the *σημεῖα* (*ἔργα*) point towards the mystery of Christ's person, they manifest it only to those who believe. According to Bultmann, Jn frowns upon "signs", he demands faith pure and simple. Faith based on "signs", which are a concession to human weakness, is not satisfactory. Bultmann consequently tries to reduce the *Heilswirken* of Jesus to his "word". This position has justly been criticized. There is an understanding of "signs" which is too materialistic,<sup>81</sup> but this does not mean that they are irrelevant to

<sup>80</sup> Rengstorff, *TWNT* VII, art. *σημεῖον*, 245, 4; cf. also 242, 10ff; 243, 24-25; 246-247 and esp. 248, 30ff. "Signs" lead to faith in the Father acting in Jesus, to the recognition of Jesus as Son of God and revealer of the Father.

<sup>81</sup> What Jesus rejects is a "Zeichenglauben" which stops short of seeing in his "signs" the manifestation of his glory (cf. 2,23; 4,48; 6,26.30). In other words: the "signs" must retain their "Zeugnisscharakter", must relate to Christ's person, must



true faith or a mere concession to human weakness.<sup>82</sup> Jn connects "signs" and faith, and Jesus does not reject a faith which takes account of his *σημεία* and *ἔργα*. Bultmann may be followed to this extent: it is perhaps wrong to say that "signs" produce or engender faith,<sup>83</sup> that they are the motive of faith.

The *σημεία* are an "Ansatzpunkt" for faith in that they should normally lead to the discovery of Christ's person—but faith is not produced by the *σημεία*, it is rather demanded by them. It is only then that the *σημεία* acquire their true significance (their *Zeugnis-charakter*) as disclosures of the mystery of Christ's person.

*Σημεία* are equivocal. They are revealing only to those who have faith; to those who do not they appear in a totally different light.<sup>84</sup> We find the Jews conceiving them as "wonders" and misconstruing Jesus' identity (he is a "wonder-worker" or a "political" Messiah), or regarding them as violations of the Law (the Sabbath healings!); the *σημεία* are, at most, a source of embarrassment (Jn 9,16ff; 11,47f). The *σημεία* (*ἔργα*) of Jesus, pointing as they do to his real identity, would be sufficient to save him from an unjust condemnation if the Pharisees were not blind to their true significance, as Jn 9 brilliantly illustrates.

Is to come to know the *σημεία* and to come to know the *ἔργα* one and the same thing?

Jn does not use *σημεία* and *ἔργα* indiscriminately. 1) The word *σημεία* is never found on the lips of Jesus;<sup>85</sup> the word *ἔργα* is found only on the lips of Jesus.<sup>86</sup> 2) *Σημεία* are worked by Jesus alone,

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be "diaphanous". Cf. S. Hofbeck, *Semeion. Der Begriff des "Zeichens" im Johannes-evangelium unter Berücksichtigung seiner Vorgeschichte*, Diss. Würzburg (1962-63), 182.

<sup>82</sup> Very well put by van Unnik in the text quoted above (see p. 75, n. 70).

<sup>83</sup> Cf. L. Cerfaux, "Les miracles, signes messianiques de Jésus et œuvres de Dieu selon l'Évangile de saint Jean", in: *Recueil L. Cerfaux* II, (Paris, 1962), 41-50, 44: "... normalement les miracles engendrent une certaine foi"; Hofbeck (*op. cit.*, 179): "das Sichtbare ist Motiv für den Glauben".

<sup>84</sup> On the nature and ambivalence of the Johannine *σημεία*, see the excellent analysis of L. Schottroff (*Der Glaubende und die feindliche Welt. Beobachtungen zum gnostischen Dualismus und seiner Bedeutung für Paulus und das Johannesevangelium* (Neukirchen, 1970), 245-263). Whether the "wordly" (mis)interpretation of the "signs" must be interpreted in the light of Gnostic dualism, however, is debatable.

<sup>85</sup> Two exceptions: Jn 4,48; 6,26. Jn 4,48 is a fixed OT-Jewish formula (אותות ומופתים); at 6,26 Jesus is made to use the language of the evangelist for theological reasons (cf. Rengstorff, *TWNT* VII, 245, 25ff and n. 317).

<sup>86</sup> Exceptions: Jn 6,28 (where the Jews are referring to the "works" of the Law); 7,3; 10,33 (where the Jews take up the expression just used by Jesus).

ἔργα are not. 3) Σημεῖα are limited to Jesus' earthly activity, ἔργα are not.

Cerfaux <sup>87</sup> holds that it is only when the σημεῖα are seen "dans la foi parfaite" that they become ἔργα—ἔργα being the vehicle for expressing the unity of Jesus with the Father. The idea needs a slight corrective. It is Jesus who uses the term ἔργα. He does not have "perfect faith", but perfect knowledge concerning his origin and destiny. We could speak of "perfect faith" with regard to Christians, but Jn prefers to speak of "knowledge" in this case. Were a Christian to have that knowledge of Jesus which he has of himself, the σημεῖα would become ἔργα: the "works" would no longer be seen as σημεῖα since that to which the σημεῖα, *qua* σημεῖα, point would be known in itself. Until this knowledge is had, the ἔργα of Jesus are and remain σημεῖα.

Hofbeck's opinion that the σημεῖα "point to the ἔργα, but also the other way around ... the ἔργα of Jesus show the true meaning of his σημεῖα" <sup>88</sup> cannot be held. The ἔργα themselves are σημεῖα under a certain aspect, from a certain point of view. Rengstorf's distinction is exact: the ἔργα Jesus does are done in unity with the Father; as works of Jesus they are therefore self-revelation of God and, as such, "signs".<sup>89</sup> The ἔργα themselves "signify", "manifest". They manifest God as the Father of Jesus and manifest Jesus as the Son of God. *Both σημεῖα and ἔργα* need to be interpreted (vs. Hofbeck) and this interpretation is given in the "words" of Jesus <sup>90</sup> (σημεῖα and ἔργα do not mutually explain each other). Since God manifests himself only in Jesus, it is only Jesus who can give the correct interpretation to his σημεῖα and ἔργα.

It must have already become clear to the reader how the very idea of "coming to know what Jesus does", when this ποιεῖν is related to his σημεῖα and ἔργα, is intrinsically connected with faith and, at the same time, related to "hearing Jesus".

There is a reciprocal relationship between "sign" and "word" in Jn. That faith must rest exclusively on the "word" (Bultmann, Grundmann) disregards the fact that "sign" and "word" in Jn each

<sup>87</sup> *Art. cit.*, 47.

<sup>88</sup> *Op. cit.*, 156.

<sup>89</sup> *TWNT* VII, 246-249.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 251-252.

have their part to play and are distinct realities, even though they are intimately related and dependent upon each other. Nevertheless, the "word" does have a certain excellence the "sign" lacks, for it is the "word" which expresses more clearly the meaning already contained in the "sign". In view of this it is only natural that Jn, through Nicodemus, demand that Jesus be "heard" and (consequently) that what he does be "known". Delitzsch's translation is probably correct:<sup>91</sup> the *καί* has consecutive or final value. It is by hearing Jesus that the Jews will come to know what he "does"—the words of Jesus, received in faith, will disclose the ultimate significance of his *σημεῖα*—significance already present in the *σημεῖα* themselves. Thus, "hearing Jesus and coming to know what he does" means to come to know Jesus himself, the mystery of his person, in faith (for this is possible only to faith).

That the *σημεῖα* of Jesus manifest who he is (the Son of God) is not only illustrated by the link Jn places between his *ποιεῖν* and his *σημεῖα* (*ἔργα*), it is further made evident by the other uses Jn makes of the verb.

There are texts in which Jesus says he does (*ποιεῖν*) the will of the Father (Jn 4,34; 6,38), the command of the Father (14,31), what is pleasing to the Father (8,29). These texts, considered in the light of the whole Gospel, show that Jesus' *ποιεῖν* is always dependent upon the Father. The unity of action of Jesus with the Father is expressed more forcefully when Jn has Jesus say or when it is affirmed of him that he is not able "to do" anything of himself (Jn 5,19a.30; 8,28; 9,33). This means, expressed in positive terms, that what Jesus "does" is the work of the Father acting in him or that he and the Father are one in their *ποιεῖν*. Jesus declares this openly at Jn 5,19b (cf. 14,10) and in the whole section this verse introduces (Jn 5,19-30). The Jews are not mistaken in their interpretation of Jesus' words: he is calling God his Father in a special sense, making himself equal to God. The use of *ποιεῖν* in Jn culminates in the affirmation: Jesus made (*ποιεῖν*) himself equal to God (5,18; 8,53; 10,33) by making (*ἐποίησεν*) himself the Son of God (19,7). We are to understand: his making himself equal to God was the result of what he did (*ποιεῖν*): his *ἔργα*, *σημεῖα*, his *ἔργον* of giving life (*ζωοποιεῖν*) and judging (*κρίσιν ποιεῖν*).

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<sup>91</sup> Delitzsch translates: "Does our Law judge a man without having heard him in order to (לדעת) know what he does?"

When Jn asks that the Jews come to know what Jesus "does", he is asking that they come to recognize Jesus for what he is. The two go hand in hand.

Thus, an analysis of the Johannine use of *γινώσκειν* and *ποιεῖν* confirms the conclusions reached above for *ἀκούειν*. "To hear" (*ἀκούειν*) Jesus is possible only in faith (viz., it is "to believe") because his words are not ordinary words, but words of revelation. "To know" (*γινώσκειν*) what Jesus "does" (*ποιεῖν*) is impossible without faith because the activity of Jesus (his *σημεῖα*, his *ἔργα*, his whole *ἔργον*) discloses itself only to the scrutiny of faith. "To hear" Jesus means to believe and accept what he reveals about himself in word. This, in turn, fully manifests the significance of what he "does". "To come to know what he does" means to see in his *σημεῖα*, *ἔργα*, in his *ἔργον*, the Father working in him; it is to recognize him as the Son of God.

### *Conclusion*

Jn 7,19 accuses the Jews of not doing the Law because they seek to kill Jesus; Jn 7,51 further explains in what way the (condemnatory) judgement the Jews pass upon Jesus is against the Law.

The point Jn wishes to make is that the Law, as it is understood and applied to Jesus by the Jews, is a false criterion. Only faith can judge whether what Jesus affirms and does is the realization of the divine *ἔργον*, of the salvific will of God, or not. The moment in which faith intervenes, however, the Law no longer appears opposed to Jesus (viz., Jesus to the Law). The insight gained through faith into the mystery of Christ's person opens up a new understanding of the Law. According to this "true" understanding of the Law (that which Christians possess), the Law testifies in favour of Jesus; Jesus no longer appears as a violator of the Law, but as the one who fulfills it (cf. Jn 7,21-23). *Jn brings this home at 7,51 by having the Law of the Jews establish conditions for the judgement of Jesus which can be met only by those who believe on him; by presenting faith in Jesus as demanded by the Law!*

Jn is not opposing the Law and faith, he is establishing a line of continuity between the two. What is being contrasted are rather two understandings of the relationship between the Law and Jesus: the narrow, orthodox understanding of the Synagogue and the understanding of the Church. We have moved beyond an "orthodox-Jewish"

interpretation of the Law and its requirements. Jn will repeatedly point out the insufficiency and incapacity of the Law, as understood and defended by the Jews, to come to a verdict (Jn 9!) or to convict Jesus (Jn 18!).<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> There are two other texts which are closely related to Jn 7,19 and Jn 7,51: Jn 7,23 and Jn 8,15. They will be considered in conjunction with the use Jesus makes of the Law in his own defence (see the sections on Jn 7,21-23 and on Jn 8,12-20).

## CHAPTER SIX

### JESUS APPEALS TO THE LAW IN DEFENCE OF HIS SABBATH "WORK"—JN 7,21-23.24

#### A) *Jn 7,21-23. The Sabbath work of Jesus fulfills the Law*

In analyzing Jn 7,19 we saw that Jn 7,14-24 constitutes a unit divided into three sub-sections (vv. 14-18; 19-20; 21-23) which are interrelated.<sup>1</sup> The question of the relation of Jn 7,14-24 to Jn 5 is considered in detail in the Excursus at the end of this chapter.<sup>2</sup> What has already been said need not be repeated, but attention will have to be paid to certain points which were not treated exhaustively; other points which will have to be taken up once again because of the light they cast on Jn 7,21-23.

#### a) *The unity of vv. 21-23*

The section is introduced by the words : ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς and is articulated in rigorous logical and literary sequence. Ἐν ἔργον ἐποίησα καὶ πάντες θαυμάζετε (v. 21) and ὅλον ἄνθρωπον ὑγιῇ ἐποίησα ἐν σαββάτῳ (v. 23) form an inclusion. The object of the controversy is the Sabbath healing, which is compared and contrasted with the practice of circumcising on the Sabbath, both being considered to be, in different ways, the fulfilment of the Mosaic Law.

The unity is underlined by the termini: ἔργον ἐποίησα (ἐν σαββάτῳ) ... Μωϋσῆς ... περιτομή ... Μωϋσῆς ... ἐν σαββάτῳ περιτέμνετε ἄνθρωπον ... περιτομήν λαμβάνει ἄνθρωπος ἐν σαββάτῳ ... ὁ νόμος Μωϋσέως ... ἄνθρωπον ὑγιῇ ἐποίησα ἐν σαββάτῳ.

#### b) *Jn 5 as the key to Jn 7,21-23*

In the Excursus devoted to the connection between Jn 7,14-24 and Jn 5, we refuse to adopt the view of those who would change the present order of the text and have our section follow immediately

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<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 87f; 130ff and below, pp. 166-168.

<sup>2</sup> See below, pp. 169ff.

upon chapter 5. Nevertheless, we agree that Jn 7,21-23 refers to the healing related in Jn 5,1-14 and, consequently, that 7,21-23 constitutes the continuation of the Sabbath controversy which followed upon the healing of the paralytic (Jn 5,15ff).

In our exegesis of Jn 5,1-18 we insisted<sup>3</sup> that Jn found the traditional healing pericope congenial to his own thought and incorporated it into his Gospel because it presented Jesus (or was apt to be so interpreted) as the giver of life. By having the healing take place *on the Sabbath*, Jn succeeded in bringing out the symbolical value of the healing even more clearly.

The connection of Jesus' Sabbath work with the gift of life is also evidenced by Jn 9.<sup>4</sup> Whatever position is adopted concerning the baptismal background, 9,35-41 leaves no doubt about the intention of the evangelist: the blind man makes an act of faith in Jesus; the sin of the Pharisees remains. Jn explicitly affirms elsewhere that the gift of life is the outcome of faith in Jesus<sup>5</sup> and that the lack of belief on him means to remain in sin and to die (perish).<sup>6</sup> What the blind man receives is more than physical sight, it is life.

The *ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ* Jesus works on the Sabbath (healing of the paralytic, healing of the man born blind) are concrete realizations of the one *ἔργον*: *ζωοποιεῖν*.

The reply of Jesus to the accusation made against him of violating the Sabbath at 5,17 discloses the true nature and significance of his Sabbath *ἔργον* by characterizing it as *ζωοποιήσις*.<sup>7</sup> If we follow Cullmann,<sup>8</sup> the words also indicate that Jesus' Sabbath "work" puts an end to the Sabbath by fulfilling it. The *ἕως ἄρτι* points to a time when Jesus (and the Father) will no longer "work", at least not in the same manner in which Jesus (in unity with the Father) "works" during his earthly ministry.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See above, pp. 12ff.

<sup>4</sup> See the section on Jn 9, esp. p. 26 and nn. 57-58.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Jn 3,15.16.36; 5,24.40; 6,40.47; 10,10; etc.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. esp. Jn 8,24 and comp. 12,46-50; 15,22-24.

<sup>7</sup> The Sabbath "work" of Jesus, his *σημεῖον* (vs. Bultmann, 208, n. 8), is the result of Jesus' unity of action with the Father (v. 17) in giving life and judging (vv. 19ff).

<sup>8</sup> "Sabbat und Sonntag nach dem Johannesevangelium (Joh 5,17)", in: *In Memoriam E. Lohmeyer* (Stuttgart, 1951), 127-131.

<sup>9</sup> Thüsing (*Erhöhung*, 72) has shown that the "work" of Jesus truly begins with his "exaltation", but that this moment marks the end of the first stage of his "work": his "Offenbarungswirken". Jn 17,4 means that "sowohl die Liebe und der Gehorsam einerseits als auch die Offenbarung andererseits zur Vollkommenheit geführt sind"

At Jn 9,4 the "night" indicates the period which follows upon the "hour" (*ώρα*) when the revelatory "work" of Jesus (and of the Father in Jesus) is brought to its consummation and perfection (*τελειοῦν*). As long as Jesus is carrying out his (the Father's) work of revelation on earth neither his Sabbath nor that of the Father has come. Jn sees the death and resurrection of Jesus as the end of his (earthly) *ἐργάζεσθαι* and as the "hour" which marks the beginning of the "fulfilled" Sabbath rest: the new Aeon, the Sabbath of God.

The background of this thought is to be sought in the Jewish idea that, although God rests on the seventh day, he does not rest from his "Offenbarungswirken" (giving life and judging). This was interpreted to mean that the resting of God "in the beginning" pointed forward to the fulfilment of this "rest" in the new Aeon, in which creation would be set free and recreated in Christ.<sup>10</sup> The OT Sabbath was but the "type" or "figure" of the time, after creation had been renewed in Christ, when God would rest from all his work, not only from his work of creation, but also from his work of revelation.

Jesus' work of revelation (in the concrete case at hand: the healing of the paralytic on the Sabbath, which signifies the "gift of life" by the Father in Jesus) puts an end to the Sabbath by bringing to perfection and completion the divine purpose which lay behind the OT Sabbath.

This interpretation has the advantage of bringing out very clearly Jn's presentation of Jesus' relationship to the Sabbath. In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is not presented as one who violates the Sabbath (although he is accused of so doing by the Jews), but as the one who brings the Sabbath to an end.<sup>11</sup> The verb *λύειν* at Jn 5,18 means "to destroy, bring to an end, abolish, do away with" and not "to break". The Jews may speak of Jesus not "observing" (*τηρεῖν*) the Sabbath (Jn 9,16) but Jn, through the explanation given by Jesus to his Sabbath works, wishes to show that the Sabbath Law

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(I underline). Jesus' activity (and God's) will cease with his death (end of the first stage of his "work"). This day (Sunday) is seen as the anticipation of the day when all Jesus' (God's) "work" will come to an end (end of the second stage): the *יום יהוה*.

<sup>10</sup> This thought is not mentioned explicitly in Jn, but is to be found in Heb 4,10; Ep Barn 15 and in the Gospel of Truth 22,18ff. One could add: Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, 5, 28.

<sup>11</sup> We are in perfect agreement with W. Bauer on this. Cf. *BAG*, *λύω*, 4 (p. 485); Lohse, *TWNT* VII, 28, 2f. is of the same opinion.



(as understood by the Jews) is in no way binding for Jesus, that he brings the Sabbath to an end as the Son of God.

Cullmann has failed to recognize the importance of Jn 7,21-23 as expression of Jesus' power to do away with the Sabbath by fulfilling it.

c) *The resumption of the Sabbath controversy*

Jn 7,21-23 is the continuation of the controversy which began in Jn 5,1-18. In Jn 5 the controversy had not been brought to its term; it was left unresolved, only to be set forth at Jn 7,21-23 and brought to a close in Jn 9. Jesus' activity on the Sabbath in Jn 5 certainly raised the question of his relationship to the Law, but this was treated in a veiled manner. By the time chapter 7 is reached, the debate with the Jews has become more heated and the issue at stake more explicit. The word *νόμος* was not to be found in Jn 5, indeed, apart from the Prologue, it appears at Jn 7,19.23 for the first time.

The double reference to "doing the Law" and "seeking to kill" Jesus in Jn 7,19 recalls the desire of the Jews to kill Jesus at Jn 5,18 (*ζητεῖν ἀποκτείνειν*) because of his apparent violation(s) of the Sabbath (Law). The healing of the paralytic was singled out at Jn 5,17.19ff as typifying not only all the Sabbath "works" of Jesus performed so far but his "works" in general, his whole salvific "work".<sup>12</sup> The symbolic nature of this healing is now further clarified and its significance underlined.

A number of exegetes, we have seen, interpret *οὐδεὶς ἐξ ὑμῶν ποιεῖ τὸν νόμον* at 7,19 as an allusion to the practice of circumcising on the Sabbath.<sup>13</sup> The whole purpose of Jn 7,21-23 would be to show that the Jews *break the Law* by such a practice and therefore have no right to condemn Jesus' Sabbath activity. But Jn writes that the Jews practice circumcision on the Sabbath in order that the Law of Moses *may not be broken* (*ἵνα μὴ λυθῇ ὁ νόμος Μωϋσέως*)! The only way out of this difficulty would be to say that *ὁ νόμος Μωϋσέως* at v. 23 refers specifically to the precept of circumcision on the eighth day and not the Law in general. This has been affirmed,<sup>14</sup> yet it is highly improbable that Jn, after having written: *οὐ Μωϋσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὸν νόμον; καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐξ ὑμῶν ποιεῖ τὸν νόμον* at v. 19, thereby

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Loisy, 504 and 397ff.

<sup>13</sup> Lightfoot, Barrett (both with reservations), Loisy, Bernard.

<sup>14</sup> Lagrange, Bernard.

referring to the whole Mosaic Law—the Torah, should use *ὁ νόμος Μωϋσέως* at v. 23 to refer to a precept of the Law which he calls *ἡ περιτομή* at v. 22. Furthermore, one looks in vain to find an example in the Fourth Gospel where *νόμος* is used to designate a precept of the Law.<sup>15</sup> The weakest point of this exegesis is that these authors would be having Jesus admit that he violates the Sabbath Law, which goes contrary to the whole thought of the evangelist on this point.

“Not doing the Law” cannot, consequently, refer to the violation of the Law by circumcising on this day. We attempted to show that these words have a much deeper meaning: the Jews do not do the Law because they do not believe in Jesus and, as a result, unjustly persecute and condemn him.<sup>16</sup> It is while bearing this in mind that vv. 21-23 must be approached.

d) *The meaning of vv. 21-23*

For the Jews, the healing of the paralytic represented a violation of the Sabbath; for Jn and for the attentive reader, it was a sign of Jesus' activity as the giver of life. As the *ζωοποιῶν* (in unity with the Father), Jesus cannot be accused of violating the Law by working on the Sabbath. This thought, already expressed at 5,17.19ff, is voiced again at 7,21-23. It takes on a new form (that of a casuistic Rabbinical argumentation on a point of Law) and the tone is more polemical.

In a case where the eighth day falls upon a Sabbath, it is impossible to observe both the precept of circumcising on the eighth day and that of keeping the precept which forbids all work on the Sabbath. The Jews respect the precept of circumcision and go against that of observing the Sabbath rest, arguing that the precept of circumcision is above that of the Sabbath.<sup>17</sup> Jn bases his argumentation on this legal practice, but offers an interpretation which goes beyond anything the Rabbis would be willing to concede.

Some Rabbis had already presented circumcision as a “partial” healing and had argued that, if it is licit to practice a partial healing

<sup>15</sup> Although *νόμος* is found elsewhere in the NT as a designation for a particular precept of the Law (cf. Lk 2,22; 24,44; Act 15,5 = law of circumcision!; etc.), Jn never uses the word in this sense.

<sup>16</sup> See the section on Jn 7,19, pp. 130ff.

<sup>17</sup> See the words of R. Jose (c. 150 A.D.): “See how beloved circumcision is (by God): it overrides the Sabbath”. Tanch 19b; quoted by *Str.-Bill.* II, 487 (ad Jn 7,22).

on the Sabbath by circumcising, then, *a fortiori*, it is licit to heal a whole man on the Sabbath (viz., to heal or save one who is in danger of death).<sup>18</sup> Jn's reasoning is similar to this. He uses the Rabbinical קל וחומר, already used by R. Eliezer while discussing this very point. If the Jews circumcise on the Sabbath, effecting a partial healing of man, why do they accuse Jesus for having healed a whole man? The weakness of such reasoning is obvious. Jesus was under no obligation to heal on the Sabbath (in the case of circumcision there is an obligation) nor was there any immediate urgency (as there is in the case of a man whose life is in danger).

There are indications that Jn's reasoning moves on another level and that, on this level, it acquires its true force. They are: aa) διὰ τοῦτο; bb) ἵνα μὴ λυθῇ ὁ νόμος Μωϋσέως; cc) ὅλον ἄνθρωπον (ὕγιῃ ἐποίησα).

aa) Διὰ τοῦτο

Some authors<sup>19</sup> maintain that διὰ τοῦτο follows θαυμάζετε and closes v. 21: καὶ πάντες θαυμάζετε διὰ τοῦτο. A number of considerations<sup>20</sup> speak against such a possibility and make it advisable, if not necessary, to understand διὰ τοῦτο as introducing v. 22.<sup>21</sup> In this case, the precept of circumcision given by Moses is related to the one work performed by Jesus on the Sabbath. The Jews should not be shocked, it was for this very reason that Moses gave them the precept of circumcising on the eighth day (on the Sabbath).

This can be taken to mean: Moses gave them the precept knowing that it would conflict with the Sabbath Law and in order to establish a precedent for Jesus—to show that the Sabbath Law may be broken in certain cases.<sup>22</sup> This sense presents three major difficulties: 1) It

<sup>18</sup> See the arguments of R. Eliezer (c. 90 A.D.) and R. Eleazar (c. 100 A.D.) in Tos Shab 15,16 (134) and Joma 85b. *Str.-Bill.* II, 488 (ad Jn 7,23).

<sup>19</sup> Lagrange, Bernard, Bultmann, Schlatter, Brown.

<sup>20</sup> 1) The διὰ τοῦτο is almost superfluous if attached to θαυμάζετε. 2) V. 22 would begin far too abruptly without the διὰ τοῦτο. 3) Whereas διὰ τοῦτο is frequently used by Jn to introduce a sentence (1,31; 5,16.18; 6,65; 8,47; 13,11; 16,15; etc.), it is never found at the end of a sentence. 4) Jn uses θαυμάζειν with a direct object (θαυμάζετε τοῦτο, 5,28), with a ὅτι-clause (3,7; 4,27) or absolutely (5,20; 7,15); never with an indirect object (διὰ τοῦτο).

<sup>21</sup> Westcott, Loisy, Hoskyns, Lightfoot, Barrett, with most of the versions.

<sup>22</sup> Bultmann (ad loc.); Bernard (263) finds this sense "tolerable" but prefers to attach διὰ τοῦτο to θαυμάζετε.

is negative. Jesus may break the Sabbath because there is a precedent : the Jewish custom of circumcising on the Sabbath. Such a justification is hardly in keeping with the daring assertion of Jn 5,17. Jesus, as Son of God, must work on the Sabbath also ; he does not need to have recourse to an exception established by Moses to justify his activity on the Sabbath (as if he were under the Law). 2) It would imply that Jesus acknowledges his violation of the Sabbath Law. Jn does not consider the work of Jesus a violation of the Sabbath, but its abrogation. 3) It is unable to account for the *ἵνα μὴ λυθῇ ὁ νόμος Μωϋσέως*. A precedent which establishes the possibility of acting contrary to the Law can hardly be said to give way to a custom which is practiced in order that the Law may *not* be broken.

Another explanation has been offered <sup>23</sup> which, in our view, is the only one possible. The circumcision of man on the Sabbath was commanded by Moses as a "type" or "figure" of the gift of life imparted by Jesus on the Sabbath. According to Jewish tradition, circumcision makes a man "clean" in the eyes of God, it is ordained to man's perfection.<sup>24</sup> The intention of Moses, manifested in the precept of circumcising on the Sabbath was to show that the Law is ordained to life (cf. Jn 5,39f). If the Jews had understood the meaning of what they practice, they would not be scandalized by Jesus' "work" on the Sabbath, but recognize in it the fulfilment of the Law. It is for this reason (*διὰ τοῦτο*) that Moses gave them such a precept.

bb) *ἵνα μὴ λυθῇ ὁ νόμος Μωϋσέως*

The practice of Sabbath circumcision is not mentioned to show that the Jews break the Law, but to show that Jesus heals on the Sabbath precisely in order to fulfill the Law. Just as the Jews circumcise on this day *ἵνα μὴ λυθῇ ὁ νόμος Μωϋσέως*—in order to fulfill the Law, not in order to break it (notwithstanding the apparent opposition to the Sabbath), so too does Jesus "work" (heal, give life) on the Sabbath in order that the Law may be fulfilled. The Law, as willed by God and Moses, should lead to life. That towards which the

<sup>23</sup> This interpretation is that given by Loisy and, more recently, by Hoskyns, Lightfoot and Barrett.

<sup>24</sup> "Great is circumcision because, notwithstanding all the religious duties our Father Abraham fulfilled, he was not called "perfect" until he was circumcised, as it is written : 'Walk before me and be perfect' (Gen 17,1)", Nedarim 3,11.

Law tended and which was prefigured in circumcision (on the Sabbath) has become reality in Christ's *ἔργον* (of the Sabbath).<sup>25</sup>

cc) Ὁλον ἀνθρώπων (ὑγιή) ἐποίησα

There may be an allusion to the "humanitarian" motive for the Sabbath healings,<sup>26</sup> which we find in the Synoptics,<sup>27</sup> but everything said so far leads one to believe that Jn had something quite different in mind. Circumcision is not being contrasted with the healing of the paralytic in the sense that circumcision only heals one member, whereas Jesus has healed more than one member, indeed *all* members (is the healing of a paralytic enough to warrant the assertion of having healed the *whole* man?); but in the sense that circumcision was—like all Jewish rites and like Judaism itself<sup>28</sup>—but the shadow of things to come. The Jewish rite of initiation, which made man a member of God's people, was unable to give man what Jesus came to bring. Jesus alone gives men the power to become children of God and to have life in abundance, and this is what was prefigured by circumcision.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Jn 5,39-40, which will be considered later, explicitly posits the continuity between Moses (the Law) and Christ, stressing the "perfective" nature of Christ's work with respect to that of Moses (see the section on the "bread of life" and the "living water" in Part Four).

<sup>26</sup> The interpretation is common: cf., v.g., Cullmann (*art. cit.*, 127); Brown (317); Bultmann.

<sup>27</sup> This is the interpretation which is generally advanced by those who refuse to see in the precept of circumcision and in the healing of the "whole" man any deeper meaning than that of "physical" healing (whether the *δικα τοῦτο* is connected with v. 21 or with v. 22 does not change anything). The reasoning of Jn 7,22f would be at odds with that of Jn 5,17 and would represent a variation of the "humanitarian" motive found in the Synoptics: the Sabbath is for man, not man for the Sabbath.

<sup>28</sup> Dodd (*Interpretation*, 297ff) entitles Jn 2,1-4,42 "The New Beginning" and would see the substitution of the "new order" to the "old" even in the Cana episode (the "wine" is contrasted with the "water" of Jewish ceremonial observance). There is no doubt that the cleansing of the Temple, the words of Jesus to the Samaritan woman, etc., express the conviction that Jesus has come to perfect and thereby abolish what was temporary and imperfect. We have not considered these aspects because they are only indirectly related to the Law.

<sup>29</sup> The members of the "chosen people" considered themselves God's children (Jn 8,41!); Jn says that it is Jesus who gives the power to become children of God, through faith (1,12). Similarly, the Rabbis affirmed that all Israelites would have a share in the world to come; Jn reserves this to those who believe and remain in the word of Jesus.

The point Jesus is making is highlighted by v. 24, which serves as a sort of recapitulation and ulterior clarification.

B) *Jn 7,24. The "judgement" of the Jews is unjust*

Judgement in a Jewish court was based upon the Law. After Jamnia, judges were all experts in the Law, because the Law, which was the "norm" for judgement, had to be thoroughly known.<sup>30</sup> If κρίματα were to be δίκαια they had to be κατὰ πάντα τὸν νόμον (Dt 4,8; comp. Dt 16,8). At Jn 7,24 Jesus gives another criterion: if a κρίσις in his case is to be δίκαια it must not be κατ' ὄψιν. What does this mean and what is the relationship between the accusation of judging κατ' ὄψιν and that of going against the Law by condemning Jesus (Jn 7,51; 7,19)?

Jn 7,24 is the conclusion of vv. 21-23 and, at the same time, of the whole section Jn 7,14-24. It gives the reason behind the erroneous and unjust judgement of the Jews in regard to Jesus' Sabbath activity (vv. 21-23), his διδάσκειν (revelation) and his person (vv. 14-18). To judge κατ' ὄψιν means to judge according to "appearances".

a) *The "appearances"—the Sabbath question*

What has met the eye of the Jews has been a behaviour which appears unlawful. There can be no doubt that the Sabbath works of Jesus were, technically speaking, flagrant violations of the Law. To judge according to appearances would mean to condemn Jesus as a violator of the Law. But this would be to do him injustice. The Sabbath "works" of Jesus are no ordinary "works"; they are "miracles" (for the Jews and Pharisees). This aspect of Jesus' "work" is just as apparent as their having been performed on the Sabbath. A judgement which would take both these factors into consideration is impossible, unless it be: "We cannot say he is a 'sinner' (because he works miracles) and yet we cannot say he is not a 'sinner' (because he does not keep the Sabbath)". The "injustice" of the judgement of the Pharisees in Jn 9 is not that they pronounce a *wrong* judgement, but that they pronounce a judgement *at all*. They are unable to go beyond "appearances". Any judgement made in these circumstances

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. Moore, *Judaism*, II, 183ff.

will be "unjust" because, when it comes to judging Jesus, a just judgement is precisely one which goes beyond "appearances".

It is the "disciple" of Jesus who alone can pronounce a "just" judgement. He understands the "miracle" as "sign" and goes beyond "appearances" to accept that Jesus is *παρὰ θεοῦ* in the strict, Johannine sense. This explains his Sabbath activity, which is not a violation of the Sabbath but brings the Sabbath to an end by fulfilling it.

All the arguments of Jesus, if they are to have full validity, presuppose faith. It is true that he (his "disciple") appeals to principles recognized by the Jews at Jn 7,21-23; 5,17 and 9,31-33, but such arguments are of no value unless one goes beyond "appearances".

At Jn 5,17 the reason advanced by Jesus for his Sabbath work, although based upon a sound principle of Jewish theology, must appear as no justification at all but rather as blasphemy, unless the "work" of Jesus signified by the healing of the cripple is perceived as the gift of life.

At 7,23 the words of Jesus would be, at best, a specious argument, at worst, an argument with only a semblance of reason, were we simply in the presence of a "humanitarian" motive. When the healing, on the contrary, is taken as symbolizing the gift of life, the reasoning becomes cogent and rigorous.

Judged "according to appearances", the healing could have been put off to another day (Lk 13,14!) and there was no need to tell the paralytic to carry his mat. Judged in the light of faith, the healing is the manifestation of Jesus' power to give life and is seen as the fulfilment towards which the precept of circumcision (on the Sabbath) tended: the gift of life. What is true of the "judgement" of the Jews concerning Jesus' Sabbath work is true of the judgement they pass on all his "work". The Sabbath work cannot be separated, given its "significance", from the revelation of Jesus, from his person.

b) *The "appearances"—the teaching (revelation) and person of Jesus*

V. 24 is not only the conclusion of the section which immediately precedes; it closes, we have said, the whole section Jn 7,14-24.

At 7,17 we were also dealing with a "judgement" to be made: is the teaching of Jesus of God or is he speaking of himself? In the terms of v. 18: is Jesus ἀληθής (is he the Revealer) or is he a false

teacher? The criterion which makes a "just" judgement possible was set down at v. 17.

Odeberg has justly remarked that "to do one's own will" means "to seek the glory of men, to seek one's own glory",<sup>31</sup> "to will to do the will of God" means "to seek the glory of God". Jesus' judgement is "just" (ἡ κρίσις ἡ ἐμὴ δίκαια ἐστίν) because he seeks the will of him who sent him (Jn 5,30). If the Jews sought to do the will of God, they would be in a position to pronounce a "just judgement"; but they do not desire to do his will, they seek their own glory, the glory which they receive from one another (Jn 5,44). Hence Jesus asks: πῶς δύνασθε ὑμεῖς πιστεῦσαι? Jn 5,44 and 7,17 express the same idea; it will be voiced again at Jn 8,15.

Jn 7,24 and Jn 7,19.(51) are closely related. Just as the Law demands the impossible, unless faith intervene, when it requires that Jesus be heard and what he does be known before he is judged (condemned), so too does the Law demand the impossible when it asks that a "just" judgement be pronounced upon Jesus, unless faith intervene. The words of Jesus at 7,24 show that the judgement of the Jews does not fulfill this requisite because they (do not believe and) judge κατ' ὄψιν. In other words: the Law itself demands that one believe in Jesus.

Again we are faced with a double understanding of the Law: that of the "Jews" (orthodox Judaism) and that of Jn and Jesus (the Church). According to the former, Jesus' Sabbath work is a violation of the Law, according to the latter, it is the fulfilment of the Law. The difference is to be attributed to whether one views the activity of Jesus (and its relationship to the Law) with the eyes of faith or not.

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<sup>31</sup> H. Odeberg, *The Fourth Gospel* (Amsterdam, r.p. 1968), 225.



## EXCURSUS

### *The relationship of Jn 7,14-24 to Jn 5*

A number of exegetes hold that Jn 7,15-24 should follow immediately upon 5,47.<sup>1</sup> Jn 7,14 would mark the beginning of the section Jn 7,14.25ff.

The majority of exegetes believe that Jn 7,14-24 should not be tampered with; notwithstanding the undeniable connection it has with Jn 5,30-47 and Jn 5 in general, Jn 7,14-24 should be left where it now stands as it now stands.<sup>2</sup> Jn 7,14 marks the beginning of vv. 15-24, where the question of Jesus' teaching is discussed and v. 25 marks the beginning of another section, which deals with the origin of Jesus.

The points of contact of our section with Jn 5 are numerous.<sup>3</sup> Jn 7,15 follows well upon 5,47 and 7,25 upon 7,14; 7,16 recalls 5,19.30; 7,18 recalls 5,41-44; 7,19b recalls 5,18 and 7,21-23 refers back to what has been related in 5,1-18; finally: 7,24 recalls the judgement of the Jews in 5,9ff. To this one must add that many are of the opinion that chapter 5 should follow chapter 6.<sup>4</sup> Jn 7,15-24 would therefore be separated from 5,47 in the hypothetical original only by a few verses. We mention this last point only in passing since this last assumption is itself a *probandum* and is a strongly contested issue. At any rate, the case in favour of a displacement is, at least, impressive. In order to be convincing there would have to be some indication not only that there are resemblances and points of contact between Jn 7,15-24 and Jn 5 and that vv. 15-24 *could* follow upon 5,47, but that Jn 7,15-24 presents difficulties *in its present context*. Bultmann has the audacity of writing: "dieses Stück ist an seinem jetzigen Platz unmöglich",<sup>5</sup> but he gives absolutely no proof that

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard, Bultmann, Schnackenburg ("Die 'situationsgelösten' Redestücke in Joh 3", *ZNW* 49 (1958) 88-99), Loisy (504; 148), Schulz.

<sup>2</sup> Bultmann's view has failed to win acceptance, as can be gathered from the position taken by the more recent commentaries (Lightfoot, Hoskyns, Dodd, Barrett, Brown). His position is also criticized by Meeks (*op. cit.*, 42-47) whose observations corroborate ours.

<sup>3</sup> We gather together those mentioned by Bultmann (202) and Bernard (xixf).

<sup>4</sup> Lagrange, Bernard, Bultmann, Wikenhauser, Schnackenburg.

<sup>5</sup> *Comm.*, 177.

Jn 7,15-24 does not follow naturally upon Jn 7,1-14 or that Jn 7,25ff can hardly follow upon 7,15-24; nor does he show that there is a redactional suture between vv. 14 and 15 and between vv. 24 and 25. On the contrary, he is forced to admit that vv. 15-24 is "geeignet" as continuation of v. 14 and that v. 25 is well linked with v. 19! <sup>6</sup>

*The nexus between Jn 7,15 and 5,47*

Jn 7,15, it is said, follows very well upon Jn 5,47. Jesus has made reference to the *γράμματα* of Moses. The Jews are indignantly surprised at his audacity and ask: how can he, who has never had a teacher and does not know "letters", presume to quote the Scriptures?

The sequence is possible, but presents some difficulties.

1) Much is made of the double occurrence of *γράμματα* (5,47; 7,15), yet the absence of the article in 7,15 is hard to explain if the verses did follow upon each other. *Γράμματα εἰδέναι*, as W. Bauer has richly illustrated, is a consecrated formula for "having the *Elementar-kenntnisse*".<sup>7</sup> Although this does not exclude a secondary reference to knowledge of the Scriptures, it is strange that the Jews should not simply say: *πῶς οὗτος τὰ γράμματα οἶδεν μὴ μεμαθηκώς*?

Furthermore, even if Jesus has referred to the Scriptures (in general terms!) this hardly justifies the astonishment and indignation of the Jews, or their remark. One did not need a formal education to refer to the Scriptures, as Barrett has justly remarked.<sup>8</sup> On the contrary, if 7,15 is taken as the continuation of v. 14, *γράμματα εἰδέναι* is perfectly in context. It is not so much Jesus' use of the Scriptures as his "going up to the Temple to teach", his placing himself on an equal footing with the Rabbis of his day, which is at stake.<sup>9</sup> Any man could refer to the Scriptures, not just anyone could make his way into the Temple and start teaching.

2) If great weight is placed (as it is by Bultmann) on Jesus' appeal to the Scriptures at Jn 5,39.45-47 as the motivation behind the

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 178, n. 3. Bultmann explains that the redactor exploited this by inserting vv. 15-24 between vv. 14 and 25!

<sup>7</sup> This is generally admitted to be the primary meaning of the expression. Cf. Lagrange, *ad loc.*; Bultmann, 205, n. 8.

<sup>8</sup> Rightly Barrett: "How is it that this man ... can carry on a learned disputation? It would not be surprising that an ordinary man should be able to quote Scripture ... *This is against a close connection between this verse and 5,47*" (I underline). See also Lightfoot, 178.

<sup>9</sup> See above, pp. 83-87; esp. pp. 85-87.

objection of Jn 7,15, it must be said that 7,15 would follow more naturally upon 5,47 had Jesus made actual use of the Scriptures as he does at 10,34-35 and elsewhere, quoting specific passages in his defence and arguing as a Rabbi would. The difficulty was seen by Bernard, who *supposes* that Jesus "had probably quoted specific passages".<sup>10</sup> *De facto* Jesus does no such thing. He only maintains that the Scriptures and his words are not in contradiction and that Moses wrote about him. Is this enough to warrant the indignant reaction of the Jews? Were Jesus "teaching", which in the Jewish-Rabbinical sense of the word presupposes knowledge of the Jewish writings and Rabbinical traditions,<sup>11</sup> the reaction of the Jews would be better explained. But this is exactly what Jesus is doing, according to 7,14!

Indeed, it is the διδάσκειν—διδάχῃ theme which counsels most strongly against removing 7,15-24 from its present position. Jn 7,15-24 is firmly anchored to 7,14 and 7,25ff by the "Stichwort" διδάσκειν (διδάχῃ).

As has been said above,<sup>12</sup> the verb διδάσκειν with Jesus as subject has been reserved for the momentous occasion of his "going up" to the Temple in Jerusalem for the Feast of the Tabernacles, which marks the beginning of his purely Judean ministry and leads to his crucifixion and death. It is in this setting that his "teaching" is repeatedly mentioned and emphasized (7,14.16.17.28.35; 8,20.(28).

Jn 7,15-24 is all centred around the idea of Jesus' διδάσκειν. It serves as a prelude or introduction to the whole series of revelatory discourses which follow, and which are but "teachings" concerning the person of Christ and his mission. To wish to have 7,15-24 follow upon 5,47 merely because of the word γράμματα, is to disregard the fact that the "Stichwort" διδάσκειν (διδάχῃ) is notably absent in 5,30-47 and conspicuously present in chapters 7 and 8. It is as if 7,15-18 were "hinged" upon 7,14 and 7,28. We can well understand how one would rather have 7,19-24 than 7,15-24 follow upon 5,47.<sup>13</sup>

But what of the other arguments advanced in favour of removing vv. 15-24 from their present context? Jn 7,25, it is said, follows

<sup>10</sup> Bernard, ad Jn 7,15.

<sup>11</sup> Bernard (loc. cit.), who holds that Jesus manifests this "knowledge" by his presumed quotation of specific scriptural passages at 5,47!

<sup>12</sup> See pp. 79f; 82; 85-87.

<sup>13</sup> J. Bligh, *art. cit.*, *HeythJour* 4 (1963) 115-134.

well upon 7,14. This is not surprising! Jn 7,14 introduces the discourse contained in 7,15-24. One can simply omit the discourse it introduces and have the comment of the Jews refer to the *ἐδίδασκεν* itself, deprived, as it were, of the further clarifications given in vv. 15-18. Furthermore, v. 25, introducing a new section as it does, can be sutured on to v. 17 or v. 18 just as easily as to v. 14!

There is consequently no reason which compels us to remove vv. 15-24 from their present position. The passage from v. 14 to v. 15 is smooth and logical—indeed, v. 15 follows better upon v. 14 than upon 5,47 and the reason why v. 25 can follow upon v. 14 is easily explained without having recourse to a misplacement.

We now wish to consider the other reasons advanced in favour of a transposition of our section.

1) *Jn 7,16* recalls 5,19.30. This may be granted, but the analogy between 7,16—8,28; 7,20—8,48.52 is much more close.

2) *Jn 7,18* recalls 5,41-44. This is undeniable. The analogies are perfectly obvious, but in Jn 7,18 it is Jesus who seeks the glory of God (objective genitive—vs. the subjective genitive of Jn 5,44) and this is mentioned *as the foundation of his being ἀληθής*. The “truthfulness” of Jesus (the fact that he is the Revealer), his “sinlessness” and “justice”, is a theme which is proper to chapters 7 and 8.<sup>14</sup> As opposed to the Jews and their works, we find the affirmations that Jesus is ἀληθής and that there is no ἀδικία in him (7,18), that the one who sent him is ἀληθινός (7,28). To these affirmations correspond, in Jn 8: the Father is ἀληθής (8,26), Jesus says what he has heard from him (8,26), does nothing of himself but speaks what the Father has taught him (8,28), does at all times what is pleasing to the Father (8,29). This is to seek the Father’s glory and this is why Jesus is ἀληθής (7,18). In virtue of these elucidations, ἀλήθεια can now make its appearance and be heavily stressed. Whereas in chapter 7 Jesus had simply said that he was ἀληθής, he now says that he speaks the truth (ἡ ἀλήθεια) thrice (8,44.45.46).<sup>15</sup> His origin makes his testimony ἀληθής (8,14.17) and his judgement ἀληθινή (8,16). There is therefore no “sin”

<sup>14</sup> Ἀληθινός = 7,28; 8,16; ἀληθής = 7,18; 8,13.14.17.26; ἀλήθεια = 8,32.40.44.45.46. In ch. 5 ἀληθής is used of the *testimony* of Jesus and the Father (5,31.32)—as it is in Jn 8,13.14.(17).

<sup>15</sup> Ἀλήθεια is a major theme of ch. 8. The term is found here for the first time, outside of two occurrences in the Prologue (1,14.17), used with direct reference to the revelatory activity of Jesus.

in him (8,46; comp. 7,18). Jn 7,18 is more closely bound to Jn 7-8 than to Jn 5!

3) *Jn 7,19b* recalls 5,18. Bultmann gives great weight to this point of contact. Yet 7,19b recalls 7,1 and 7,25 equally well. We can go even further: the desire of the Jews to kill Jesus is a *Leitmotiv* of chapters 7 and 8 (cf. 7,1.19.25.30.32.44; 8,20.37.40.59). 7,19b therefore links this verse to these chapters, rather than to chapter 5.

4) *Jn 7,21-23* refers back to the healing of the paralytic and the resulting controversy related in Jn 5,1-18. Yet, if the present order is maintained, a considerable amount of time has elapsed between the healing and Jesus' reference to this *ἔργον*.<sup>16</sup> A chronological difficulty of this type can hardly be used as a valid argument against the present order of the Gospel.<sup>17</sup> From a literary point of view, there is no reason why Jn should not refer to an event related at length as a "typical" instance of Jesus' "working" on the Sabbath<sup>18</sup> and shown to be (as explained by Jesus) the grounds for the incipient persecution of Jesus by the Jews. It is only natural that, when the murderous intent of the Jews is mentioned (Jn 7,19), the healing of the paralytic should be recalled, especially since this intent is itself viewed as a violation of the Law (7,19; comp. 5,16.18, where the Jews implicitly accuse Jesus of violating the Law!). That the healing in question has been narrated some one hundred verses earlier in the Gospel is of no consequence. On the contrary, we have a very close parallel to such a procedure: the other "sign" worked on a Sabbath (9,1-7) is not only recalled in 10,21 but in 11,37 as well!

5) Finally, 7,24 recalls the judgement of the Jews in 5,9ff. There is a relationship insofar as the miracle wrought in 5,1-9 is misinterpreted by the Jews and used unjustly as a pretence for persecuting Jesus. Nevertheless, *κρίνειν* or *κρίσις* do not appear in this section (5,9-18), whereas chapters 7-9 are set under the sign of *κρίσις*: the Jews seek to arrest Jesus, they seek his life, they condemn him *in absentia*, they seek to stone him and, in chapter 9, we witness a futile attempt to secure an official conviction of Jesus (attempt which will be set forth

<sup>16</sup> If the events recorded in Jn 5 took place at Pentecost, approximately fifteen months would have elapsed.

<sup>17</sup> Brown (315f) rightly maintains that the one *ἔργον* which Jesus worked on the Sabbath was selected by Jn for dramatic purposes and that the chronological relation is of little significance.

<sup>18</sup> Loisy, 504.

in chapters 10ff on another "charge"). Thus, the term *κρίνειν* appears at 7,50-51 and 8,15 with the Jews as subject and the whole of chapter 9 is an illustration in act of their *κρίνειν κατὰ τὴν σάρκα* (cf. 8,15; comp. 7,24).

### *Conclusion*

There are striking similarities between chapter 5 and 7,15-24 which may point to these units having belonged together in some preliterate stage of the Johannine tradition or even in some written account belonging to this tradition.<sup>19</sup> If this is the case, these units were incorporated into the fabric of the Gospel with consummate artistry by the author of the Gospel himself. The evidence adduced to show that, in their present literary form, the pericopes need to be rearranged is inconclusive. Any attempt to rearrange the pericopes raises more problems than it solves and destroys evident patterns, which show every sign of being neither forced nor artificial, in order to create new patterns, which are merely conjectural.

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<sup>19</sup> It has been the merit of Bultmann to have pointed out the kinship and profound analogies between Jn 5,1-47; 7,15-24 and 8,13-20. Although we do not follow his reconstruction of the "primitive order" we will make use of the unquestionable similarities of these texts better to understand their meaning.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### JESUS APPEALS TO THE LAW IN DEFENCE OF HIS CLAIM TO BE THE SON OF GOD—JN 10,34-36

Jn 10,24-38 has been treated in Part One.<sup>1</sup> We saw that this pericope represents the climax of Jesus' self-revelation to the Jews. Jesus declares, more openly than ever before, that he is one with God. The Jews treat this assertion as blasphemy and seek to stone him. Jesus defends himself by 1) quoting a text of the Law (νόμος), 2) referring to the significance of his ἔργα.

The recourse to the Law (vv. 34-36) comes in the very midst of the references to the ἔργα (vv. 32-33) and to their significance (vv. 37-38). The ἔργα (and their significance) are referred to by Jesus in conjunction with the text of the Law because both defend his claim of being the Son of God. The first side of the question (the ἔργα as indications that Jesus has been sent by God into the world and is the Son of God—v. 36) has already been treated;<sup>2</sup> we now wish to pay attention to Jesus' recourse to the Law.

Jn 10,34-36 has been singled out because 1) Jesus has recourse to the Law in his self-defence and uses it against the Jews; 2) the recourse is connected with the most important "charge" made against Jesus (blasphemy);<sup>3</sup> 3) it furnishes a typical example (another will be afforded by Jn 8,12-20) of the way Jn uses the Law as an apologetic tool against the Jews.

The Jews accuse Jesus *περὶ βλασφημίας* because, being a man, (*ἄνθρωπος ὢν*) he makes himself God (*ποιεῖς σεαυτὸν θεόν*). There is a text of the Law in which men (?) are called "gods". Jesus bases his right to call himself God (Son of God) upon this text.

#### A) *Jn's quotation of Ps 82,6 (LXX)*

The quotation from Psalm 82 seems strange. Jn quotes only the

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<sup>1</sup> Above, pp. 63ff.

<sup>2</sup> Above, pp. 74ff.

<sup>3</sup> One can say that the proof advanced in Jn 10,34-36 is meant to justify not only the declaration of v. 30, but all the previous declarations of Jesus, in which he claimed a special relationship to God (notably Jn 5,17ff).

first part of the verse: ἐγὼ εἶπα, θεοί ἐστε. In the light of the accusation of the Jews (ἄνθρωπος ὃν ποιεῖς σεαυτὸν θεόν) this is perfectly logical but, after having quoted the words of the Psalm (ἐγὼ εἶπα, θεοί ἐστε), Jesus goes on to say: λέγετε ὅτι βλασφημεῖς, ὅτι εἶπον, υἱὸς (τοῦ) θεοῦ εἰμι? The Jews had accused him of making himself "God", not of making himself "Son of God". In view of this, one would expect that Jn would also have quoted the second part of the verse (καὶ υἱοὶ ὑψίστου πάντες), especially if the two expressions υἱὸς (τοῦ) θεοῦ (what Jesus claims he is—v. 36) and θεός (what the Jews accuse him of making himself—v. 33) carry a different meaning.

It is difficult to say whether they carry a different meaning or not. Before Pilate the Jews will say that Jesus, according to the Law, must die because he made himself Son of God (υἱὸν θεοῦ ἑαυτὸν ἐποίησεν—Jn 19,7), at Jn 10,33 they seek to stone him because he made himself God (ποιεῖς σεαυτὸν θεόν). On the other hand, Thomas will address Jesus as ὁ θεός μου (Jn 20,28).

Θεός and υἱὸς (τοῦ) θεοῦ are probably equivalent for Jn. If they are not, the affirmation of Jesus would have to be taken in the sense that to claim to be "Son of God" is not quite the same as to claim to be "God". Jesus would be saying that the essence of his divinity is constituted by his Sonship, which implies equality (θεός) in total dependence from the Father (υἱός). The argument *a minori ad maius* would also receive a new innuendo: if the Scriptures call men "gods" how much more can Jesus, sent by the Father, call himself *Son* of God.

That a different shade of meaning may be present is not impossible but, in our opinion, is hardly probable. The fact remains that the two expressions (θεός—υἱὸς (τοῦ) θεοῦ) are different and one would have expected Jn to have quoted not only the first but also the second part of Ps 82,6:

ἐγὼ εἶπα, θεοί ἐστε καὶ υἱοὶ ὑψίστου πάντες

if he was to pass on to having Jesus declare:

λέγετε ὅτι βλασφημεῖς, ὅτι εἶπον, υἱὸς (τοῦ) θεοῦ εἰμι.

Again we can merely risk a conjecture.

Jn seems to have been thinking of the whole verse of Ps 82,5; this would explain the passage from θεός (v. 33) to υἱὸς (τοῦ) θεοῦ (v. 36). Thinking specifically about the accusation: ἄνθρωπος ὃν ποιεῖς



σεαυτὸν θεόν, Jn would have quoted the first half of the verse (ἐγὼ εἶπα, θεοί εστε); however, the second half of the verse (ἐστὲ ... υἱοὶ ὑψίστου πάντες), which then presented itself to his mind, would have led him to write: ὅτι εἶπον, υἱὸς (τοῦ) θεοῦ εἰμι instead of ὅτι εἶπον, θεός εἰμι.

If the second half of the Psalm verse presented itself to his mind, why did he not write it? Jn may have deliberately avoided writing down the second half because he carefully avoids using υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ of anyone except Jesus.

When speaking of Christians, he calls them τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ, never υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ. Although divine filiation is a major theme of his Gospel, Jn apparently wishes to distinguish the unique "Sonship" of Jesus from the "filiation" of all others. We could possibly add that the πάντες also dissuaded Jn from quoting the whole verse. For Jn not all are "children of God".

These suggestions cannot move beyond the realm of the hypothetical, but it cannot be doubted that Jn was thinking of the whole verse of Ps 82, even if he quoted only the first half.

This corresponds to a procedure which is characteristic of the way in which the NT writers quote the OT—only a verse, or half verse (sometimes we simply have an allusion) is quoted, but the reference is not only to the words quoted.<sup>4</sup>

#### B) *The meaning of "those to whom the word of God came"*

A preliminary question must be answered before one can attempt to determine the meaning Jn gave to the quotation from Ps 82: what meaning do these words have in the Psalm itself (viz., what meaning is given to these words by interpreters)?

The question is that of determining the identity of those who are being addressed as θεοί, in the Psalm. One of four interpretations is usually proposed:

1) Most authors agree that the Psalm is to be understood as a "Gerichtsrede" in the style of the prophets. The Psalmist uses strongly mythological language: God holds judgement over the other "gods",

<sup>4</sup> This is admitted by Dodd (*Interpretation*, 271, n. 3), Lightfoot (ad loc.), Brown (409) and A. Hanson, "John's Citation of Ps 82, John 10,33-36", *NTS* 11 (1964-65) 158-162, 159-160.

who are made responsible for the evils of the world and condemns them to die, like mortals.<sup>5</sup>

2) J. A. Emerton<sup>6</sup> has tried to show that these "gods" are the superhuman beings to whom the nations of the world were allotted and who were called "angels" by later Judaism. They can be called "gods" because of the divine word of commission to rule the nations.

3) Others believe that these "gods" are the judges,<sup>7</sup> to whom God conferred a share in his power over the world and who are therefore called "gods".

4) Lastly: a number of exegetes, following the Rabbinic interpretation of the Psalm, believe that it is Israel, the members of the "chosen people", who are being addressed as "gods", after having received the gift of the Law on Sinai.<sup>8</sup>

Before trying to decide which interpretation, if any, is that followed by Jn, an important detail must be stressed. Whatever the identity of those addressed in the original intention of the Psalmist or whatever the identity attributed to them by later interpretations, Jesus (Jn) himself gives an explanation to the words he quotes: those who are called "gods" are "those to whom the word of God came" (*πρὸς οὓς ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐγένετο*).

*Ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ* is not to be identified with the "word" of the

<sup>5</sup> So H. J. Kraus, *Psalmen*, Biblicher Komm. AT (Neukirchen, 1960), ad loc.; A. Weiser, *Die Psalmen*, ATD (Göttingen, 1959), ad loc.; H. Schmidt, *Die Psalmen*, Handbuch zum AT (Tübingen, 1934); A. Deissler, *Die Psalmen erläutert* (Düsseldorf, 1963-65), ad loc.

<sup>6</sup> "Some New Testament Notes. The Interpretation of Psalm 82 in John 10", *JTS* N.S. 11 (1960) 329-332.

<sup>7</sup> E. Pannier and H. Renard (Pirot-Clamer, *La Sainte Bible*, V, *Les Psaumes* (Paris, 1950), ad loc.), referring to Delitzsch, Gratz and others, speak of men, the "judges" (of Israel). E. G. Briggs (*The Book of Psalms*, ICC (Edinburgh, 1960), ad loc.) speaks of the "wicked governors of the nations ... rulers and judges"; Deissler (*op. cit.*, II, 152f), while accepting the mythical "Mutterboden", believes that "gods" is a "mythisch-poetische Bezeichnung für die Richter" of Israel. Kraus (*op. cit.*) and Schmidt (*op. cit.*) are opposed to having "gods" designate men. The latter adduces v. 7 as contradicting this view.

<sup>8</sup> For the Rabbinic interpretation, see the texts quoted by *Str.-Bill.*, II, 543, 2 (ad Jn 10,34). This interpretation is proposed for Jn 10,34 by Barrett (ad loc.), N. A. Dahl ("The Johannine Church and History", in: *Current Issues in NT Interpretation. Essays in Honor of O. A. Piper* (New York, 1962), 124-142, 133), Hanson (*art. cit.*) and J. S. Ackermann ("The Rabbinical Interpretation of Ps 82 in the Gospel of St. John", *HarvTR* 59 (1966) 186-191).

Psalm: ἐγὼ εἶπα, θεοί ἐστε.<sup>9</sup> It is illogical to have Jn write: "If those are called 'gods' to whom the word of God 'I say, you are gods' came, how can you say, etc."<sup>10</sup> "Those to whom the word of God came" is not a useless repetition but gives the reason why some were called "gods": the "word of God" came to them.

If it is Jn who has added the explanation "to whom the word of God came", we must ask what sense πρὸς οὓς ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐγένετο would have for him. Are we to think that Jn, in speaking of "those to whom the word of God came", has the "gods" or the "angels" or the "judges"—to whom the Psalm would be addressed—in mind and that "the word of God" is the "divine word of commission" which established them as rulers and judges of the world (nations), or that "the word of God" is to be taken in a still broader sense and that "those to whom the word of God came" is Israel?

No concrete "word" is indicated by Jn and the Psalm does not say that those addressed by God as "gods" were so called because "the word of God came to them". It is not said that Jn has not given *his own interpretation* to a verse he has taken from a Psalm, without regard for the real or presumed addressees of the words *in the Psalm*. This would be in perfect keeping with Rabbinical exegesis.

If, for a moment, we abstract from the whole question of the real or presumed identity of those who are addressed as "gods" *in the Psalm* and simply begin by asking what sense the words "those to whom the word of God came" would have *for Jn*, we will perhaps better be able to understand Jn 10,34ff.

We have a perfect right to suppose, first of all, that ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ for Jn would have the same sense it would have for any Jew: the "word of God" is the Torah. Even if there were no texts in Jn to substantiate this, it could be assumed that Jn shared the view common to Jews and to the early Church: the OT revelation was "the word of God". That Jn was aware of the identification of the λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ with the Torah, and with the Decalogue in particular, is evidenced by his use of τὸν λόγον τηρεῖν, as we will attempt to show further on.<sup>11</sup> But there are, fortunately, two cases in Jn, the only two cases where the "word of God" is not presented as mediated through Christ, in which it is clear that "the word of God" designates

<sup>9</sup> Vs. Lagrange, Bultmann.

<sup>10</sup> Rightly Loisy (627).

<sup>11</sup> See below, pp. 403ff.

OT revelation, the Torah. Jn 9,29 has the Pharisees say that they know God spoke to Moses. The λαλεῖν of God here is the "word(s)" he spoke to Moses, the Torah.<sup>12</sup> Jn 5,37-38 accuses the Jews of never having heard the "voice" of God and not having his "word" abiding in them. The reference is again to the revelation of the OT—to Sinai and the Torah.<sup>13</sup>

We also have a perfect right to suppose that Jn also shares, with all the NT writers, the idea that the "word of God" is the "word" Jesus brings, the "word of Jesus". There is, of course, no need for suppositions: it is one of the major themes, if not the major theme, of the Fourth Gospel, theme which Jn has developed in his own particular fashion.

According to these two acceptances of ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ a) the OT revelation, the Torah; b) the NT revelation, the "word(s) of Jesus", "those to whom the word of God came" would be either: a) Israel, the Jewish nation; b) Christians. It would be they who would be called "gods, sons of the Most High (God)".

Is this idea, in its double perspective, to be found in the Fourth Gospel?

#### a) *The Jews as the "children of God" in Jn*

It would be surprising if the Jews in Jn did not vindicate for themselves the privileges which they believed belonged to them as the nation *which had accepted the Torah* (the "word of God"), refused by the Gentiles. The most outstanding of these privileges, the source of all others, was their exclusive right to consider themselves the "people of God", set aside from all other nations. In virtue of the Covenant Law they belonged to God in a special way—Israel was his son, the members of the "chosen people" were his "sons", his children. This idea, which is firmly rooted in the OT, becomes commonplace in later Judaism.

The Jews in the Fourth Gospel are very much aware of what they consider to be the privileged position they have by birthright; their defence of what they consider their privileges occupies a central place in Jn 8. At 8,33 the Jews affirm that, as descendants of Abraham, they are free (as heirs of the promise they cannot be truly

<sup>12</sup> See above, pp. 106-108; 221f.

<sup>13</sup> See below, pp. 216ff.

enslaved). Jesus replies that they are the slaves of sin and that only *the Son*, who remains (in the house) forever, can set them free. Freedom is here connected with discipleship and sonship. Were the Jews *υιοί* (as they think they are) and not *δοῦλοι* (as in fact they are) they would be 'free' and remain in the "house" (of the Father) eternally.<sup>14</sup> The discussion now turns explicitly to the question of sonship. The Jews claim that Abraham is *their father* and the answer of Jesus (*εἰ τέκνα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐστε*) brings out that to say: "Abraham is our father" or to say "we are children of Abraham" is the same thing (8,39). The Jews then pass on to say: *ἡμεῖς ἐκ πορνείας οὐ γεγεννημέθα· ἓνα πατέρα ἔχομεν τὸν θεόν*. They are claiming to be *τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ*—as is shown not only by the parallelism with the claim just made in v. 39, but also by the parallelism with Jn 1,12f. The *γεγεννημέθα*, followed immediately by *ἓνα πατέρα ἔχομεν τὸν θεόν*, shows that the Jews are claiming to be born of God (cf. Jn 1,12f: *τέκνα θεοῦ ... ἐκ θεοῦ ἐγεννήθησαν*).

b) *Believers as the "children of God" in Jn*

That hearing and accepting the "word" of God spoken by Jesus (viz., "believing" on Jesus) makes men "children of God" is a major theme of John's Gospel.

The mission of Christ has, as its object, the communication of eternal life. Life is given to those who enter into union with Jesus (and, through Jesus, with the Father) through faith in him as the Son of God and Messiah. The union of believers with the Father in Christ is described by Jn in terms of the father-children relationship. At the close of his earthly ministry, when he is about to ascend to the Father, Jesus says to Mary Magdalene, "Go to my brethren (*πρὸς τοὺς ἀδελφούς μου*) and say to them: *ἀναβαίνω πρὸς τὸν πατέρα μου καὶ πατέρα ὑμῶν καὶ θεόν μου κ.τ.λ.* (Jn 20,17). *Ἀδελφός* is a new title, attributed to the disciples now that the "earthly work" of Jesus has come to an end and they have truly become "Christians" (cf. Act 1,15).<sup>15</sup> The title is used in immediate conjunction with "the Father": *ὁ πατήρ ... ἀδελφοί ... ὁ πατήρ ... πατήρ* (20,17). The words which follow the title, while distinguishing between the manner in

<sup>14</sup> On Jn 8,35 and the background of the opposition *υιοί* — *δοῦλοι*, cf. Dodd, *Hist. Trad.*, 379-382.

<sup>15</sup> Westcott (ad Jn 20,17) has pointed out that the title *ἀδελφοί* "occurs very significantly in the record of the first action of the Christian society".

which God is the Father of Jesus and the Father of the ἀδελφοί of Jesus, affirms the true divine sonship of believers.

The words are to be understood in the light of such texts as Jn 1,12; Jn 8 and Jn 11,52. In Jn 1,12 the τέκνα θεοῦ are explicitly defined as those "who believe in his name" (τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ). It is faith, this total adherence to the person of Christ as revealed and expressed through his name, which makes men "children of God".<sup>16</sup> Jn 8 tells us that what determines whether men are τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ or not is their capacity and readiness to hear the word of God (Jn 8,47). Only those who love Jesus, the one whom God sent (Jn 8,42), and who believe, as Abraham did (Jn 8,39.40)<sup>17</sup> can call God their Father (8,41f). When Jn speaks of Christ's death gathering τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ διεσκορπισμένα into one (Jn 11,52), he is thinking of all those who, through Christ's death, had come to believe on him.<sup>18</sup>

The sonship of believers is true divine sonship, it is community of life with the Father and the Son. Although Jn distinguishes between the Sonship of Jesus (υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ) and the sonship of believers (τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ), it cannot be doubted that the latter is true divine sonship, although not a sonship of "nature".

In summary we may say that we find two different perspectives in John's Gospel: 1) the "word of God" (OT revelation) makes the Israelites children of God; 2) the "word of God" (NT revelation, revelation in Christ) makes men children of God.

How are these two to be reconciled? Jn himself gives the solution.

c) "*Those to whom the word of God came*" = "*the children of God*"; *Jews or Christians*?

A preliminary observation must be made before one can attempt to answer this question. It would appear that, for Jn, the prerogatives which once belonged to the Jewish people have passed over, with the coming of Christ, to his followers, the Christian community.<sup>19</sup> The very name "Israel", which once designated the theocratic people,

<sup>16</sup> For the meaning of πιστεύειν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα, cf. Dodd, *Interpretation*, 184; J. Dupont, *DBS* VI, art. "Nom de Jésus", 527-530.

<sup>17</sup> On this, see below, pp. 341; 393-397.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Pancaro, *art. cit.*, *NTS* 16 (1969-70), 127ff.

<sup>19</sup> For a more exhaustive explanation of the following points, cf. *ibid.*, 120-128, and Pancaro, *art. cit.*, *NTS* 21 (1974-75) 396-405.

now designates the Christian community, those who believe on Jesus. If the Jewish nation was described in the OT as the "flock" of Yahweh, in Jn the "flock" is now constituted by those who hear Christ's voice. The Jewish nation was once the "people of God", now this "people" is constituted by those who believe on Jesus.

The same transferral has taken place with the title τέκνα (υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ). When the Jews, at Jn 8,33ff, vaunt their descent from Abraham and assume that they have God as Father, Jesus denies this flatly. They are not children of God, they are children of the devil. At the same time, Jesus lays down the new principle which determines whether one is a child of God or not: it is one's attitude towards Jesus and his "word". Only those who love Jesus and can "hear" his "word" (believe) are children of God. In the Prologue the same idea is expressed. The Word came to his own (people) and they did not receive him, but to all those who did receive him (the Word), he gave the power to become children of God.

Would Jn deny that the Israelites were once the people of God, the children of God, for having received his "word" (OT revelation, the Torah)? Obviously not, but Jn does not seem to reflect *explicitly* on this. He is concerned with the present. The children of God are those who hear the word of Christ; "Israel" are those Jews (and Gentiles?) who have believed on Jesus; the people of God, his "flock", are those who have gathered around the Exalted Lord.

There seems to be, however, a line of continuity, rather than one of opposition. Those who have heard God's word in the past, hear the word of Jesus; those who are true followers of the Law come to Jesus; those who have believed the words of Moses accept the one about whom he wrote.

At Jn 5,37-38 Jesus tells the Jews that they have never heard the voice of God nor seen his form because they do not believe on the one whom he sent.<sup>20</sup> The parallelism with Jn 10,35 is striking because it is highly probable that Jn 5,37f refers—as does Jn 10,35—to the revelation of God on Sinai, to the "word" which came to the men of old, the "word of God". What decides whether the Jews have truly heard the voice of God and seen his form (in the past) and have his word abiding in them (in the present) is their attitude towards Jesus, the one God sent. What decides whether they have a right to call themselves "children of God" (Jn is thinking of the Jews to whom

<sup>20</sup> The text is analyzed in detail further down, pp. 216ff.

Christ is speaking, without excluding the Jews of the past or examining whether they had any such right) for having received the "word of God" of the Old Dispensation is whether they now accept the final revelation of God in Christ—as Abraham would do! (Jn 8,40).

The coming of the "word of God" to Israel makes men "gods", "children of God". Jn is thinking of the Israel of God—implicitly of the Israel of old, explicitly of the new Israel, which is the continuation of the Israel of old and inherits its privileges.

C) *The meaning of the quotation in Jn in its possible relationship to those who were called "gods" (children of God) by the Psalmist*

The various identities given to those who are called "gods" in Ps 82,6 were listed above. We said that Jn was not necessarily applying the words *θεοί ἐστε* to those addressed (or presumably addressed) in the Psalm. Consequently, we tried to determine the meaning "those to whom the word of God came" would have for Jn, without taking the quotation from Ps 82,6 directly into account. It must have become clear that, if what we have said so far is correct : 1) the words *θεοί ἐστε* are addressed to *men*.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, if Jn was thinking of the original (or presumed) addressees of Ps 82,6, we must conclude that he could not have had "angels" (or "gods"), but either the "judges"<sup>22</sup> or the Israelites<sup>23</sup> in mind. Of these two alternatives<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> It would be strange that, in reply to the accusation : "Being a *man*, you make yourself God", Jesus should adduce an OT text in which not men, but angels are called "gods". This is the weakness of Emerton's hypothesis (*art. cit.*)—as the author himself implicitly recognizes.

<sup>22</sup> That Jn is thinking of the "judges" at 10,35 is the most common interpretation found in the commentaries (Bernard, B. Weiss, Schanz, Knabenbauer, Brown, Lightfoot, Zahn, Strathmann).

<sup>23</sup> To the authors quoted above (n. 8), who hold that Jn 10,35 refers to Israel (Billerbeck, Barrett, Dahl, Hanson, Ackermann), we can add Brown (with reservations).

<sup>24</sup> There is a third possible interpretation of Jn 10,34f, which would not pay attention to the sense the verse of the Ps would have : it would refer to all those to whom the word of God came—all the organs of revelation, the prophets in particular (Loisy, Hoskyns). The application of *πρὸς οὓς ἐγένετο ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ* to the prophets is certainly warranted, if Jn is reflecting the LXX. Here *ἐγένετο λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ πρὸς* ... is a "technical" expression used of the prophets (we refer the reader to Hatch and Redpath). But it is important to note that Gen 15,1 speaks of the word (Heb. דְּבַר; LXX *ῥήμα*) of God coming to Abraham and that Mek Ex 12,1 has "the word (of God)



the latter is in perfect harmony with the second conclusion we arrived at : 2) those to whom the word of God came are, for Jn, the members of the Israel of God.

It is quite possible that the evangelist was acquainted with the interpretation according to which the words *θεοὶ ἐστε καὶ υἱοὶ ὑψίστου πάντες* were addressed to Israel, after the gift of the Law, and had this interpretation in mind. The coming of "the word of God" (the Torah) which, according to the Jews, made them "children of God" is (implicitly) subsumed in the coming of "the word of God" in Jesus, which makes believers (the true Israelites) "gods", "children of God".

D) *Is the "word of God" which "came" to Israel the Word of God?*

Hanson holds that, in quoting Ps 82,6, Jn is not only thinking of Israel being addressed on Mount Sinai, but that the "word of God" which addresses Israel on this occasion is the pre-existent Word of the Prologue. The use of *ὁ λόγος* in the Prologue certainly speaks in favour of this sense, but one should be cautious in using the personified "Word" of the Prologue to explain the "word of God" as it is used in the rest of the Gospel.

There is, to begin with, the question of terminology. (*Ὁ*) *λόγος* is never used without qualification by Jn in the body of the Gospel.<sup>25</sup> This is no doubt because, used without qualification, it indicates the personified, pre-existent Logos. With the terms which invariably qualify it, however, the word *λόγος* designates the word of Jesus (the word of the Father, of God, as spoken by Jesus), which is distinct from his person. From the strict point of view of terminology, *ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ* cannot be equated with the Logos (*ὁ λόγος*). It is therefore highly inadvisable to wish to substitute "the word of God" to *θεός* in Ps 82,1 and understand *ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ* at Jn 10,35 as referring to the pre-existent Logos.<sup>26</sup>

There are other indications that "the word of God" in Jn 10,35

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came to Moses and Aaron" (היה הדבר לאהרן ולמשה). The expression (*ἐγένετο ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ πρὸς ...*) is used of Solomon (3 K 6,11) and of David (1 Chron 22,8, with the dative). It is therefore possible that Jn has extended the expression to all those to whom the word of God came (Israel—Christians).

<sup>25</sup> On this, cf. Kittel, *TWNT* IV, 131, 19ff.

<sup>26</sup> Vs. Hanson, *art. cit.*, 161.

should not be interpreted in this sense. Jn writes that it is God (the Father) who spoke to Moses (9,29) and who made his voice heard and his form seen at Sinai (5,37); it is his word the Jews do not have abiding in them <sup>27</sup> and which is manifested by the fact (or: which is why) they do not believe the one (the Word) whom the Father sent (5,38).

One must also ask whether Jn would have wished to present the Logos as giving the Jews the Law on Sinai. His viewpoint rather seems to be that the Law, although the "word of God", is superseded by the final revelation which is marked by the Word of God becoming flesh—which came to his own, without being received by them.

If we have understood Jn correctly, one of the main purposes of his Gospel is to contrast the "word of God" spoken to Moses with the "word of God" Jesus speaks as the Word made flesh. To have the Word speak the word before the fulness of time does not seem to be very Johannine, notwithstanding the affirmation of the pre-existence contained in the Prologue. The Word did not come (into the world) before the Word became flesh.<sup>28</sup>

#### E) *The argument "a minori ad maius"*

##### a) *The word of God = the pre-existent Word*

Hanson, who holds that "the word of God" at Jn 10,35 means "the pre-existent Word", paraphrases the argument *a fortiori* as follows: "If to be addressed by the pre-existent Word justifies men in being called gods, ... far more are we justified in applying the title Son of God to the human bearer of the pre-existent Word ..." <sup>29</sup> The author's paraphrase seems highly objectionable. To consider Jesus "the human bearer of the pre-existent Word" is not only non-Johannine, it is questionable even from a theological point of view. But let us limit ourselves to Jn. Jn no doubt considers Jesus the

<sup>27</sup> Not all exegetes would agree with this statement, but see our discussion of the text below, pp. 224ff.

<sup>28</sup> Again, many exegetes (Westcott, Bernard, Boismard, Schnackenburg) would not be in agreement, but would prefer to understand "He came unto his own" as a reference to the activity of the Word of God in the OT. But a number of authors (Lagrange, Barrett, W. Bauer, Loisy, Brown) understand v. 10 (where the reference is to the "Word", not to the "light") as referring to the Incarnate Word.

<sup>29</sup> *Art. cit.*, 161.

bearer "par excellence" of the divine word, he certainly does not consider him the "*human bearer of the pre-existent Word*". In the Prologue Jesus is the λόγος ἐνσαρκος, the Word-made-flesh, he is not the "human bearer of the pre-existent Word". Jn 10,35 may be paraphrased in terms which are more acceptable: "If to be addressed by the pre-existent Word makes men "gods" (children of God), the Word-made-flesh (Jesus) is, *a fortiori*, justified in calling himself God, the Son of God". Against this interpretation, however, stands all we have just said above. One is ill-advised to identify "the word of God" at Jn 10,35 with the pre-existent Word of the Prologue.<sup>30</sup>

b) *The word of God ≠ the pre-existent Word*

If "the word of God" is not taken to mean "the pre-existent Word", Jn 10,35 would still make good sense: "If those to whom the word of God came can be called 'gods' (children of God), all the more can the Word of God (Jesus) be called 'God' (Son of God)".

But the difficulty remains: if in the Prologue Jesus is presented as the Word of God, in the rest of the Gospel he is rather presented as the one who speaks the word of God. Taking this fact into account, we propose a slightly different interpretation.

Jn has moulded the idea of the Son of God in the first instance on the prophetic model and presents him as the one sent by God to speak his word to the world;<sup>31</sup> yet he never speaks of Jesus having "heard the word" he is commissioned to speak, of the "word of God coming to" Jesus.<sup>32</sup> Jn writes that God "gave" Jesus his word, that Jesus speaks as the Father has told him, has taught him; that Jesus speaks the truth he has heard with God; that Jesus speaks "what he has heard" with the Father. He is using a mode of expression found in the Jewish Apocalyptic literature and applying it metaphorically to Jesus in order to indicate that the word he speaks is God's word. At the same time, the eminent union which exists

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<sup>30</sup> Bernard, Lagrange and Dodd do not mention any reference to the Prologue; Brown considers it an "interesting possibility (but no more)"; Hoskyns speaks of "a delicate suggestion" which must remain such if we are not to fall into a "hopeless anachronism"; Bultmann rejects any allusion to the Word of the Prologue (vs. Westcott, Loisy).

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Dodd, *Interpretation*, 254f, who draws a parallel between Jn 10,36 and Jer 1,5.

<sup>32</sup> This point will be given exhaustive treatment in the section on the μαρτυρία of Jesus. See below, pp. 197ff.

between Jesus and the Father, expressed by Jn in terms of divine Sonship, places Jesus infinitely above all those "to whom the word of God came" (viz., "comes" through Jesus). Hence the care with which Jn avoids writing that Jesus speaks *the word(s)* he has heard from the Father.

It is extremely important to note the passage from Jn 10,35a to 10,35b. "If those to whom the word of God came can be called gods, he whom ..." It is at this point that the whole christology of the Fourth Gospel comes into play. In a certain sense the word(s) of God has (have) been heard by Jesus too, but not in the manner in which the word came to any other. The relationship of Jesus to the Father is unique—he is the one the Father has consecrated and sent into the world.

The argument "a minori ad maius" now assumes new power. The "word of God" addressed to men (Jn is thinking of the "word of God" Jesus speaks with the idea of the "word of God" spoken to the Israel of old in the background) made them "gods" or "children of God". If this is so, what are we to say of Jesus, who speaks the word(s) of God in virtue of his unique status and relationship to God? The conclusion can only be: he is God, the Son of God.

Jn does not conclude that Jesus can be called "God" because he is the Word of God. This is no doubt in keeping with Johannine thought, as expressed in the Prologue, but Jn 10,34f seems to be following a slightly different line of thought, that which we have sketched very summarily.

#### F) Οὐ δύναται λυθῆναι ἡ γραφή

It may not be *necessary* to suppose that οὐ δύναται λυθῆναι ἡ γραφή refers to the fulfilment of a prophecy, for it could be a parenthetical assertion of the permanent authority of the OT,<sup>33</sup> but it does seem logical to suppose that the permanent authority of the passage quoted (ἡ γραφή)<sup>34</sup> is manifested for Jn precisely in the

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Bernard, cliii.

<sup>34</sup> Γραφή in the singular denotes the passage of Scripture quoted or referred to (cf. Jn 7,38.42; 13,18; 17,12; 19,24.28.36.37), but there is probably a secondary reference to the Scriptures as a whole. Cf. G. Schrenk, *TWNT* I, art. γραφή, 750-754; Bultmann, 297, n. 2. The plural γραφαί (Jn 5,39) denotes the whole OT. Lagrange affirms the identity of γραφή and νόμος at Jn 10,34f. This does not seem to be perfectly true. See below, pp. 327ff.

application he makes of it and is thereby "realized". Jungkuntz<sup>35</sup> remarks that the words "the Scripture cannot be dissolved" imply the fulfilment of the Scripture and Hanson<sup>36</sup> insists that Jn sees some prophecy, contained in Ps 82, being realized. Which is this prophecy? Hanson finds it in the last verse of the Psalm: "Arise, O God, judge the earth, for thou shalt inherit among the Gentiles". The Father would be addressing the Son as *ὁ θεός*. The sentence looks towards the future and is to be fulfilled in Jesus. Therefore, since he is called God in Ps 82,8, it must be legitimate to understand him as being God now.<sup>37</sup> We do not believe so much imagination is required or that we need look so far! The Scripture which cannot be dissolved is that which declares that some men have the right to call themselves *θεοί, υἱοὶ ἐψήστων*. This prophecy is fulfilled for Jn with the coming of Jesus, whose word gives those who believe the power to become "children of God"; it is *a fortiori* a prophetic allusion to Jesus who alone deserves the title of "Son of God" as the one "to whom the word of God came" (if we may apply to Jesus what Jn refuses to say of him) in an absolutely unique manner—who heard the truth from God as the one who was "with him from the beginning".

G) *The value and force of the reasoning behind Jn 10,34-36*

One must ask, at the end of this investigation, just what value the reasoning of Jn 10,34ff has.

The manner of argumentation shows that we are dealing with an "argumentum ad hominem".<sup>38</sup> Jesus (Jn) appeals to the Law which the Jews accept and adopts the manner of reasoning of the Rabbis in order to defend his claim to divinity. But would his argumentation be convincing—even for one familiar with Rabbinical exegesis?

Jungkuntz has correctly drawn attention to the fact that there is

<sup>35</sup> R. Jungkuntz, "An Approach to the Exegesis of John 10,34-36", *ConcThMonth* 35 (1964) 556-565, 559f.

<sup>36</sup> *Art. cit.*, 159.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

<sup>38</sup> The argument "ad hominem" is hardly to be taken to signify that Jesus (Jn) does not attribute any "massgebende Autorität" to the Law (vs. Strathmann, *ad loc.*). On the contrary, the Law is referred to not only because of the authority it had for the Jews but also for that which it had (as "word of God") for Jn and the community to which he belonged.

a "petitio principii" in the reasoning of Jesus.<sup>39</sup> The Jews are accusing Jesus of having called himself "*God*", the Psalm calls men "*gods*". The "petitio" is not avoided by having recourse to the argument "a minori ad maius" (i.e., being sanctified and sent by the Father is infinitely superior to "receiving the word of God", hence Jesus can call himself "*God*", "the Son of God") "because it was precisely this fact which the Jews were calling blasphemy, namely, that Jesus came from the Father in an infinitely superior and unique sense".<sup>40</sup>

On the basis of this observation, Jungkuntz abandons the traditional interpretation (which we have accepted and modified) and proposes an interpretation of his own. But it runs aground on the same difficulty.

According to Jungkuntz the "judges" were called "gods" in a prophetic sense. The prophecy pointed towards the coming of the Judge, the Messiah, who would replace the "judges" of old. Jn presents Jesus as this Judge.

Even if one admits that there is, in the OT, an "implicit prophecy that God himself would in human nature become his people's Judge and Deliverer" <sup>41</sup> (which is quite difficult to admit), one fails to see how the dilemma is resolved and the "petitio" done away with *because it would be precisely the claim made by Jesus of being the divine Judge which the Jews would be calling blasphemy*.

Are we to hold, with some exegetes,<sup>42</sup> that Jn 10,34-36 is a mere quibble, a "persiflage" which, ultimately, does not prove a thing? In our opinion, we are dealing with a rigorous, irrefutable argument ... for Christian Jews!

—Some men (for Jn : "those to whom the word of God came") are called

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<sup>39</sup> Jungkuntz, *art. cit.*, 557-558. Our interpretation does away with a second difficulty pointed out by this author: the apparent equivocation between "those to whom the word of God came" and "being sanctified and sent". Both expressions say the same thing on different levels. Those who receive the word of God are "sanctified and sent"—become disciples, children of God; Jesus has, in a unique and eminent manner, received (heard) from the Father the "word" he proclaims (this may be expressed by saying that he was sanctified and sent).

<sup>40</sup> Jungkuntz, *ibid.*, 558.

<sup>41</sup> Jungkuntz, *ibid.*, 564.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. esp. Bultmann (297) and Lagrange (ad loc.). For Lagrange the argument is so inconclusive that "il faut *par ailleurs* faire la preuve de ses prétensions". Bultmann proposes an alternative solution to taking the words of Jesus as a "persiflage": that they be ascribed to the redactor. We do not at all agree that "die Argumentation ... befremdet innerhalb des Joh.-Ev'g".

*θεοί, υἱοὶ ὑψίστου in the Law.* In the background is the claim made by the Israelites of old of being "sons of God" in virtue of their reception of the word of God, the Torah.

—*The Scripture was, prophetically, speaking of those who would become "children of God" through the reception of the word of God.* Jn is thinking of Christians, to whom "the word of God came" in Jesus—of those who believed on the name of Jesus (Jn 1,12). He has deepened the concept of filiation through faith already claimed by Israel and given it a christological foundation. The divine filiation of those who accept the word of God in Jesus is a reality for Jn—they are "children of God" in the proper sense of the term (we would speak of filiation through grace).

—*If this is the case and if even the Jews cannot object to those who received the word of God being called "sons of God", what are we to say of Jesus?* The conclusion is unavoidable. Being the one sent by God "from above" to proclaim his word to the world, being the Revealer (the one whose word is the word of God), Jesus cannot be accused of blasphemy for having called himself the "Son of God".

The moment in which the claim Jesus makes of having been consecrated and sent into the world (viz., of being the divine bearer of the "word of God") is not accepted, the reasoning simply cannot stand up.<sup>43</sup> Jn himself has felt this, for he immediately adds the testimony of the *ἔργα* (vv. 37f). We will note the same procedure at Jn 8,12-20. The Law is indeed used as a "tool" against the "Jews", but the manner in which it is used presupposes an understanding of the Law which is Christian and an understanding of the Law which has moved beyond the horizon of orthodox Judaism.

If one assumes that the debate between Jesus and the Jews is a projection into the past (with a certain foundation in the life of Jesus) of the controversy between Church and Synagogue,<sup>44</sup> the reasoning can be accepted as valid. The author of the Gospel would be thinking of the "true" sonship of believers and reminding the Jews of their claim to divine sonship as members of the people to whom the word of God came. Basing himself on this indisputable fact (expressed in

<sup>43</sup> Jungkuntz, at the end of his article (565), must admit that the argument has validity only in a context of faith.

<sup>44</sup> In this sense also: A. Richardson, *The Gospel according to Saint John* (London, 1959), 135; R. H. Strachan, *The Fourth Gospel, its Significance and Environment* (London, 1941), 228; Barrett, ad 10,34.

the "Scripture"), he would be arguing that Judaism cannot treat Jesus, *the* bearer of the divine word, as a blasphemer (and attack his followers for propagating such "blasphemy") for having claimed to be God, the Son of God.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### JESUS APPEALS TO THE LAW IN DEFENCE OF HIS TEACHING-REVELATION

The present chapter deals with the use Jesus (Jn) makes of the law in defence of his teaching-revelation. It is important to recall, once again, that the teaching of Jesus is the revelation he brings and that this revelation, in turn, is self-revelation, inseparable from his person—who he is and what he represents for man.

The passages we wish to consider are Jn 5,31-39.40-44.45-47; Jn 8,12-20 and Jn 6,45.

*Jn 5,31-39* and *Jn 8,12-20* deal with the *μαρτυρία* Jesus adduces in defence of his teaching-revelation (the immediate reference being to Jn 5,17.19-30 and Jn 8,12, respectively). The *μαρτυρία* adduced is either that of the Torah (*sensu lato*)—Jn 5,37-39, or is guaranteed as valid by the Law (Jn 5,31; 8,17). The interest for our topic lies not only in this, but also in the manner in which Jn sets out to show that the Jews have unjustly (according to the standards of the Law!) refused not only the *μαρτυρία* the Father gave to Jesus and Jesus bore to himself during his earthly ministry (Jn 5,36; 8,12ff) but, in so doing, have also proven that they have rejected (viz., never grasped) the *μαρτυρία* given by the Father to Jesus in the Torah (the revelation given on Mount Sinai and the Scriptures).

Before examining Jn 5,31-39 and Jn 8,12-20, it will be necessary to investigate and determine the nature of *μαρτυρεῖν* and *μαρτυρία* in Jn, as distinguished from the rest of the NT. We shall see that *μαρτυρία* is a term of revelation in Jn and is practically synonymous with *λαλεῖν*. A comparison of the two terms will reveal that *μαρτυρεῖν* differs from *λαλεῖν* mainly because it brings out the “juridical” implications of Christ’s *λαλεῖν*. The relationship which exists between *μαρτυρεῖν* and *κρίνειν* will thereby be given and we will be in a position to understand both Jn 5,31-39 and 8,12-20, where the themes of revelation, testimony and judgement seem to be curiously intermingled.

*Jn 5,40-44*, a text we will examine in conjunction with 5,31-39, is relevant to our topic not only because it represents (with 5,45-47) the conclusion of the section concerning the “*heilsgeschichtliche*” *μαρτυρία*

of the Father, but also because it is a Johannine reflection on Jewish unbelief. It gives the reason why the Jews have not accepted Christ and have proven unfaithful to their own sacred history. The reason is not their fidelity to the Torah and to Moses (as they claim) but that they lack the love of God (the Law commanded!) and do not seek his glory.

*Jn 5,45-47* is the climax of the whole section (*Jn 5,31ff*) and provides an invaluable contribution to understanding the relationship established by *Jn* between Moses and Jesus, the Torah and the Gospel. The Jews have believed neither Moses nor his writings. Moses accuses the Jews of apostasy!

*Jn 6,45* has been inserted in this chapter, although it has ties both with Part One and with the "bread of life" (Part Four), because it presents us with an instance in which Jesus quotes a prophecy from the OT (Torah) in defence of his teaching.

### 1. *Μαρτυρεῖν* AND *μαρτυρία* IN *JN*

#### A) *The non-specific Johannine usage*

It would seem that *Jn*, like the other authors of the NT, uses *μαρτυρεῖν* with "men" as subjects, in the sense of "testifying to a fact".<sup>1</sup> The question, however,

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<sup>1</sup> H. Strathmann (*TWNT* IV. art. *μάρτυς*, 477-521) has shown that, in the NT, an evolution in the meaning given to *μάρτυς* is observable. From the meaning of "witnessing to facts" we pass to that of "witnessing to the facts of the 'Heilsgeschichte' in virtue of direct experience". These "facts" cannot be testified to without going beyond a mere attestation of "fact" in the empirical sense. The *μάρτυς* becomes one whose testimony to "facts" includes "die gläubige, bekennende und werbende Verkündigung ihrer Bedeutung" (*ibid.*, 495, 40f). The last step is reached when the "Wahrheitszeuge" is no longer a "Tatsachenzeuge"—as in the case of Stephen (Act 22,20). From *μάρτυς* Strathmann passes on to *μαρτυρεῖν* and *μαρτυρία* and wishes to see in these terms the same meanings present in the term *μάρτυς*. He apparently overlooks the important fact that there seems to be a difference in the NT between the use of *μάρτυς* and *μαρτυρεῖν* — *μαρτυρία*. One is astonished to note that, in the case of *μαρτυρεῖν*, the conditions for a "werbendes Bekenntnis" are met only by Act 23,11, where it is an apostle who bears witness (*διαμαρτυρεῖσθαι*) to (his faith in) Christ. To this one example only 1 Cor 15,15, Act 26,22 and Heb 7,8 could be added. In the overwhelming number of cases, where men are the subject of *μαρτυρεῖν*, the object is never religious (Mt 23,31; Lk 4,22; Act 6,3; 10,22; 16,2; 22,5,12; Rom 10,2; 2 Cor 8,3; Gal 4,15; Col 4,13; 1 Tim 5,10; Act 20,26; Gal 5,3; Eph 4,17; 1 Thess 2,12). What has been said of *μαρτυρεῖν* holds good for *μαρτυρία*. This word is used sparingly in the NT outside of the Johannine writings. It is found only 7 × (Mk 14,55.56.59;

arises as to whether testimony in these cases (we will consider the testimony of the Baptist, the disciples and the evangelist separately, for they belong in a class of their own) has to do with mere "facts";<sup>2</sup> whether Jn uses *μαρτυρεῖν* at all in a non-religious sense. This has been affirmed by Strathmann and denied by Preiss.<sup>3</sup>

The texts in question are: 2,25; 3,28; 4,39.44; (7,7); 12,17; 13,21 and 18,23. In these texts we are undeniably in the presence of an attestation of fact, but we must ask whether the facts themselves do not have religious overtones.

4,44: Jesus testifies that a prophet is not honoured *ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ πατρίδι*. The reader is reminded of Jn 1,11: *εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθεν, καὶ οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον*. The lack of faith of the Galileans (Judeans?) is the object of the *ἐλέγχεω* (a juridical term) of the Spirit (Jn 16,8) and a fact to which Jesus bears witness during his ministry. At Jn 7,7 we are told that Jesus (by his presence and the resulting *κρίσις*) testifies to the fact that the "works" of the world (as opposed to the *ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ* or better: the *ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ* which is to believe on the one whom God sent—Jn 6,28f) are evil.

2,25: is also to be understood against this background. The context of 2,25 speaks of imperfect faith and recalls such texts as 3,16-21 and 3,31-36. Jesus needs no one to bear witness of man. The testimony of man is implicitly contrasted with that of Jesus which is based not on outward appearances, but is a *δικαία, ἀληθινὴ κρίσις*. The testimony Jesus bears of man—again we are reminded of 7,7—makes the testimony of man concerning man unnecessary.

3,28: The disciples of Jn are called upon to bear witness that he said: *οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐγὼ ὁ Χριστός*. The context indicates (cf. 1,19-34) that witnessing to these words becomes an indirect witness to the person of Christ.

4,39: The Samaritan woman testifies that Jesus has told her all she ever did.

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Lk 22,71; 1 Tim 1,13; Act 22,18). In all these cases the *μαρτυρία* is that given by men. There is only one instance in which *μαρτυρία* does not have a profane object; once again it is Paul who bears witness to Jesus (Act 22,18). We seem to be in the presence of an instance in which *μάρτυς* took on a technical meaning *μαρτυρεῖν* and *μαρτυρία* do not have. This warrants caution in approaching Jn where both *μαρτυρεῖν* and *μαρτυρία* are found more frequently than in any other NT writing, but *μάρτυς* is not found at all. In our opinion the idea of *μαρτυρεῖν* — *μαρτυρία* as a "verbendes Bekenntnis" cannot do justice to the use of these two terms in Jn, although it is true that the idea is present insofar as that which is testified to (we shall presently see what constitutes the object of this testimony) must be accepted (hence the idea of "Werbung"). Strathmann's article labours under the difficulty that he has not succeeded in bringing out the specific differences proper to Jn's use of these terms (apart from their strong christological orientation).

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Gal 4,15; Col 4,13; 2 Cor 8,3; etc.

<sup>3</sup> Strathmann (*ibid.*, 502, 26-28); Preiss, *art. cit.*, 105. For Preiss the verb and substantive always have a religious sense, except for 4,44 and 13,21. Strathmann holds that the verb is found "in einer nichtspezifischen Verwendung" at 2,25; 3,28; 4,39.44; 12,17; 13,21; 18,23. Strathmann is right in holding that we are here in the presence of an attestation of fact and that the usage is not "specifically" Johannine, but the facts themselves always have religious overtones—with the exception of 13,21.

The fact has religious implications, as can be gathered from the words: πολλοὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτόν ... διὰ τὸν λόγον τῆς γυναικὸς μαρτυροῦσας.

12,17: The crowd bears witness to the resurrection of Lazarus. The fact is, of course, not without religious significance being, as it were, an anticipation of Christ's resurrection and an indication of his power over death.

13,21: Jesus testifies that Judas will betray him. Here we have a "profane" object (an act of betrayal). But the "witnessing" is a prophetic utterance.

18,23: Jesus challenges the servant who struck him to bear witness to the wrong εἰ κακῶς ἐλάλησα, μαρτύρησον περὶ τοῦ κακοῦ. The context has already been analyzed and we said that the reference here is less to the answer Jesus has just given to Annas than to his whole teaching (his διδασχὴ—his revelation) for which the Jews seek to condemn him.

We therefore must agree with Preiss: μαρτυρεῖν in Jn, even when used of "Tatsachenzeugnis", always has religious overtones (even in 4,44—vs. Preiss; the only possible exception being 13,21). As for μαρτυρία there is only one case (8,17) in which it is used in a "profane" (juridical) sense. But this verse cannot be considered in isolation—the testimony of two men is referred to only in relation to the testimony of the Father and the Son. Apart from these few exceptions, there are no other examples in Jn where a "Tatsache" (even with "religious" overtones) is the object of witnessing or where μαρτυρεῖν and μαρτυρία are used in a profane sense. But it would be wrong to equate this usage of μαρτυρεῖν and μαρτυρία with that which is specifically Johannine (as Preiss seems to do). The error of Strathmann has not been that of distinguishing the usage found in these texts from that found in the texts we will presently examine, but the failure to point out the difference between the use of "Tatsachenzeugnis" in Jn and that which we find in some other NT texts, where μαρτυρεῖν is used in a purely profane sense.

### B) *The specific Johannine usage*

#### a) *The object of μαρτυρεῖν—μαρτυρία in the specific Johannine usage: the person of Jesus in his relationship to the Father*

John the Baptist testifies to Christ as the light (1,7,8), to Christ's pre-existence (1,15), to Christ as the Son of God (1,32,34), or simply to Christ (3,26). Only once (1,19) does he testify to the effect that he is not the Christ (which is an indirect testimony to Jesus as the Christ). Once (5,33) he testifies to the "truth" (= Christ). Jesus claims: "The Father testifies to me—περὶ ἐμοῦ—" (5,32 bis; 5,37; 8,18), "the ἔργα testify to me—περὶ ἐμοῦ—" (5,36; 10,25), "the Scriptures testify to me—περὶ ἐμοῦ—" (5,39), "the Spirit will testify to me—περὶ ἐμοῦ—" (15,26), and that the disciples will testify to him (15,27—the object is implicit, cf. 15,26). It is again Jesus who says he does not testify to himself—περὶ ἐμῶτοῦ—(5,31). At 8,13 the Jews accuse him of testifying to himself—περὶ σεαυτοῦ—; Jesus answers: "If I testify to myself—περὶ ἐμῶτοῦ—" (but not in the same sense as in 5,31) "my testimony to myself—περὶ ἐμῶτοῦ—is truthful" (8,14,18).

The only instances which seem to go contrary to this usage are: aa) Jn 19,35 and 21,24; bb) the cases in which Jesus is said to testify to what he has "seen"

and "heard"—3,11,32; co) the cases in which John the Baptist and Jesus are said to testify to the "truth"—5,33; 18,37. None of these cases constitute true exceptions.

aa) *Jn 19,35 and 21,24*

Just as the Baptist, at 1,34, does not witness to what he has seen (i.e., the Spirit descending and remaining upon Jesus), but to what this signifies (that Jesus is the Son of God), so too the "one who has seen" does not bear witness to the fact of the water and blood issuing from Jesus' side (19,34), but to the hidden reality he sees in this: that Christ is the giver of the Spirit, that he is the Lamb of God. The same may be said of 21,24. The *μαρτυρεῖν περὶ τούτων καὶ γράψας ταῦτα* embraces everything written in the Gospel, which is set down as a testimony that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

bb) *The testimony of Jesus to what he has seen and heard*

A more serious problem is raised by the texts in which Jesus testifies to what he has seen (*ὃ ἐώρακαμεν*—3,11) and to what he has seen and heard (*ὃ ἐώρακεν καὶ ἤκουσεν*—3,32). Here Jesus no longer seems to be testifying to his own person. We will dwell upon this formula because it shows that Jesus' *μαρτυρεῖν* to *ὃ ἤκουσεν*—*ὃ ἐώρακεν* in Jn is inseparable from Jesus' revelatory activity and is practically synonymous with *λαλεῖν*.

'O (*ὃ*) *ἤκουσεν μαρτυρεῖ (λαλεῖ)*

What Jesus speaks (*λαλεῖν*) is the "word" and this "word" is, at one and the same time, his word and the word of Father. The *ῥήματα* are the *ῥήματα* of Jesus (5,47; 12,47,48; 15,7) and of God (3,34; 8,47); the *λόγος* is the *λόγος* of Jesus (4,41; 5,24; 8,31.37.43.51.52; 14,23,24; 15,20; 18,32) and of the Father (5,38; 8,55; 10,35; 14,24; 17,6.14.17). That the word of Jesus is the word of God is most clearly expressed at 3,34 (*ὃν γὰρ ἀπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ θεοῦ λαλεῖ*) and 14,24 (*ὃ λόγος ὃν ἀκούετε οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὸς ἀλλὰ τοῦ πέμψαντός με*) and also when Jesus is said not to speak of himself (7,17; 12,49). The identity of Jesus' word with the word of the Father can further be seen by comparing 5,38 and 8,37; 8,43 and 8,47. What Jesus speaks (*λαλεῖν*) is the word of God (*λόγος, ῥήματα τοῦ θεοῦ*).

Given the equivalence we have just pointed out between *μαρτυρεῖν* and *λαλεῖν*, one can rightly ask whether what Jesus has heard (*ὃ ἤκουσεν*) and to which he bears witness (which he "speaks") is (are) the word(s) of God. Kittel<sup>4</sup> denies this flatly. Nowhere in the NT is it affirmed that the "word of God" was addressed to Jesus, that Jesus "heard the word of God" or that "the word of God came to Jesus"; not even in contexts where it would have been natural to find the formula *ἐγένετο ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ πρὸς ...* applied to Jesus, as in the case of the Baptism (Mt 3,17; Mk 1,11; Lk 3,32) and Transfiguration (Mt 17,5; Mk 9,7; Lk 9,35) scenes. The reason Kittel gives is "that the conception such a manner of speaking implies

<sup>4</sup> *TWNT* IV, 114, 29ff.

was not considered appropriate to describe the unique relationship of Jesus to God and was therefore consciously or unconsciously avoided".<sup>5</sup>

In the opinion of the writer, this is only partially correct in the case of Jn. There is a sense in which Jesus may be said to have heard the word of God, but Jn emphasizes that it is in virtue of his unique relationship to God. Jn accomplishes this by using formulas which come very close to affirming that Jesus "heard the word of God", while avoiding any such explicit statement.

Jn 10,34ff, which we have already examined,<sup>6</sup> is very interesting in this respect. The reasoning implies that the word of God came to Jesus (that Jesus heard the word of God), but in an incomparably more elevated manner than it did to Israel and does to Christians. This is precisely what Jn states elsewhere. At 8,55 Jesus says: *οἶδα αὐτὸν καὶ τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ τηρῶ*. Some commentators<sup>7</sup> simply explain: Jesus obeys the Father. This is true, but Jn speaks of *λόγος* and the context indicates that a spoken word is intended because 8,55 corresponds to 8,51: *ἐάν τις τὸν ἐμὸν λόγον τηρήσῃ*.<sup>8</sup> Jn 17,6.8 casts light on 8,55 and is even more forceful: *τὸν λόγον σου τηρήσῃ*. The *λόγος* is the *λόγος* of God, kept by Jesus (8,55) and kept by the disciples, yet it is also the *λόγος* of Jesus, to be kept (8,51). *Τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἔδωκάς μοι δέδωκάς αὐτοῖς*: here Jesus declares that he has given the disciples the words (the *λόγος* of v. 6 as individual, uttered words—*ῥήματα*) the Father has given him. Since we are dealing with "words", this can only mean that Jesus "heard the words" God spoke to him, just as the disciples "hear the word" Jesus speaks to them. There is still another text which is capital: *ἃ οὖν ἐγὼ λαλῶ, καθὼς εἰρηκέν μοι ὁ πατήρ, οὕτως λαλῶ* (12,50). Here Jesus speaks the words the Father has spoken to him exactly as they were spoken to him by the Father. This text is also interesting in that we have: *ἃ λαλῶ = τὸν λόγον, τὰ ῥήματα* (cf. 12,48). In all probability this is also what is implied in the expression *ἃ ἤκουσα*; the pronoun cannot but stand for the *λόγος* or *ῥήματα* of the Father. Jn 7,17 and 12,49 lead in the same direction: *οὐκ ἀπ' ἐμαντοῦ λαλῶ* or *ἐξ ἐμαντοῦ οὐκ ἐλάλησα* means that Jesus speaks the word(s) he has heard (cf. 12,49 and comp. 12,50). Jn 16,13 can further be adduced. If the Spirit does not speak of himself, it is because *ὅσα ἀκούσει λαλήσει*. The Spirit, like Jesus, speaks the words he hears. The same conclusion can be drawn from the texts which speak of Jesus being "taught" by the Father (8,28; comp. 7,16.17). It is the *διδαχή* Jesus had received from the Father which he "speaks": *καθὼς ἐδίδαξέν με ὁ πατήρ ταῦτα λαλῶ*.

We must conclude that it is in speaking the *ῥήματα*, the *λόγος* τοῦ θεοῦ to the world that Jesus bears witness to what he has heard, what he has heard being, by implication, the word(s) of God which he speaks.

It is true, however, that we never find a text which *explicitly* states that Jesus hears the word(s) of God. This expression has, in fact, been avoided by the evangelist. We have already examined Jn 10,34ff and seen that the logical sequence is not

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 115, 14ff.

<sup>6</sup> Above, pp. 175ff; esp. pp. 187f.

<sup>7</sup> Loisy, Hoskyns, Lightfoot.

<sup>8</sup> Even if the singular seems to embrace the "word" in its totality, Lagrange is faithful to the text when he comments: "il met son honneur à observer *la parole que Dieu lui fait entendre* comme un ordre" (I underline).

followed in order to bring out that the manner in which Jesus has heard the word of God is based on a unique relationship to the Father and differs radically from the way in which the word of God came to all other men. The same procedure is found at Jn 9,29. The Pharisees claim: *ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν ὅτι Μωϋσεὶ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός* ... Again, as at 10,34ff, the reasoning seems to break off. Normally, Jn should continue: *τούτῳ δὲ οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὐ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός* or: *τούτῳ δὲ οὐκ οἶδαμεν εἰ λελάληκεν ὁ θεός*. Instead he goes on to say: *τούτον δὲ οὐκ οἶδαμεν πόθεν ἐστίν*. It is because Jesus is *παρὰ θεοῦ* that God has spoken to him in a way in which he could never have spoken to Moses.<sup>9</sup>

Being *ὁ ἀνωθεν ἐρχόμενος* means that Jesus has heard what no mortal has and it is on this basis that he speaks. Yet, to express this, Jn did not wish to use a formula which would seem to place Jesus in the same position as anyone who "hears the word of God" in the traditional, habitual sense.<sup>10</sup> Besides this, one must bear in mind that *τὸν λόγον, τὰ ῥήματα (τοῦ θεοῦ) ἀκούειν, λαμβάνειν* are also technical terms which belong to the terminology of the kerygma. One can understand why Jn would hesitate to have Jesus hear the word(s) of God, be it even as *ὁ ὢν παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ*. He avoided this by using such equivalents as *ἃ ἤκουσα, τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἔδωκάς μοι, καθὼς εἶρηκεν, ἐδίδαξέν μοι ὁ πατήρ* or: *τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἣν ἤκουσα*. We are dealing with metaphorical language which does not present the inconveniences the expression *τὸν λόγον ὃν (τὰ ῥήματα ἃ) ἤκουσα* would present.

*Ὁ (ἃ) ἑώρακεν μαρτυρεῖ (λαλεῖ)*

What of the testimony Jesus bears to what he has seen? We have noted that what he has seen is the object of both his *μαρτυρεῖν* and *λαλεῖν*. Jesus speaks as if he has seen heavenly things which he communicates to men or to which he testifies. However, whereas Jn tends to identify the *ἃ ἤκουσεν* with the words the Father has (metaphorically) spoken or given to Jesus, the *ἃ ἑώρακεν* cannot be further clarified or determined, unless we say that what Jesus has seen is the Father. Jn explicitly affirms that Jesus has seen the Father (1,18; 6,46), but is it possible to equate *ἃ ἐγὼ ἑώρακα παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ* with *ὁ πατήρ ὃν ἐγὼ ἑώρακα*? *ἃ ἐγὼ ἑώρακα παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ* seems to indicate that it is not the Father who is the object of Jesus' vision.

One arrives at the conclusion that, whereas it is possible to hear what Jesus has heard (since Jn tends to identify this with the word of God which Jesus speaks), it is not possible to contemplate what Jesus has seen. We are told, though, that Jesus "testifies" to and "speaks" of what he has seen—if we wish to discover what he has seen, we will have to turn to his *λαλεῖν*.

<sup>9</sup> Note the difference: *God* has "spoken" (*λελάληκα*—revelation is implied) to Moses; the *Father* has "spoken" (*εἶρηκεν*) to Jesus; Jn 9,29; 12,50.

<sup>10</sup> We cannot allow for the possibility that, since Jesus tends to become identified with the *λόγος*, Jn did not wish to write that Jesus heard the word of God. If this were the case, Jn should not write that Jesus speaks the word(s) of God, or that Jesus, who is the truth (14,6) should hear the "truth" from God (8,40).

cc) *The testimony of Jesus (and the Baptist)*<sup>11</sup> to the "truth"

With the formula *μαρτυρεῖν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ* we once again seem to be in the presence of a testimony being borne to something other than the person of Jesus. Jesus (18,37) testifies to the "truth".

Once again there is a parallelism with *λαλεῖν* because Jesus is said to speak (*λαλεῖν*) the "truth" he has heard from the Father (8,40). The parallelism shows that the "truth" is inseparable from the "word(s)" Jesus speaks (and from his person, as we shall see).

*Ἀλήθεια* is often used equivalently for *τὰ ῥήματα* (comp. 3,34 with 8,40; 8,46 with 8,47) or for the *λόγος* (comp. 8,31 with 8,32; 8,37 with 8,40; 8,43b with 8,45). The clearest text is Jn 17,17: *ἀγίασον αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ· ὁ λόγος ὁ σὸς ἀληθείᾳ ἐστίν*. The "truth" which Jesus speaks—to which he witnesses—is the "word" which he speaks. Just as Jn comes close to writing: *ὁ λόγος ὃν (= ἡ ἀλήθεια ἦν) ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ*, he could almost write: *τῷ λόγῳ ὃν ἤκουσα μαρτυρεῖ*, (but we shall see that *μαρτυρεῖν* and *λαλεῖν* are not perfectly equivalent, so that it is more appropriate to have Jesus (and John) witness to the "truth" rather than to the "word").

Jesus' *μαρτυρεῖν* to what he has seen and heard and to the "truth" cannot be separated from his *λαλεῖν*. This can best be seen by comparing (the doublets?) 3,11-15 and 3,31-36; 3,32 and 8,26 (cf. also 15,15); 3,11 and 8,38. Here *μαρτυρεῖν* and *λαλεῖν* are used interchangeably.

*Μαρτυρεῖν* and *λαλεῖν* are correlative terms. If we wish to know that to which Jesus "testifies" when he "testifies" to what he has "seen" and "heard" or to the "truth", we must turn to his *λαλεῖν*.

b) *The object of Jesus' λαλεῖν (μαρτυρεῖν)*

Jesus speaks neither of "visions" which he saw nor of "words" or "things" which he heard.<sup>12</sup> He does not tell us anything about the God whom he saw, about the nature of God.<sup>13</sup> Ultimately, when Jn (Jesus) speaks of God,<sup>14</sup> it is to tell us

<sup>11</sup> The *μαρτυρία* of John to the "truth" will not be considered here. Let it suffice to say that when John testifies to the "truth" he testifies to the person of Jesus insofar as Jesus is the fulness of revelation. See below, pp. 211ff.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Bultmann, *Theologie*, 414f.

<sup>13</sup> We find neither "Gottesprädikationen", affirmations about the nature of God such as are found at 1 Tim 1,11.17, nor affirmations of natural theology such as we find in Aet 17,24ff. If we do find the affirmation *πνεῦμα ὁ θεός* (4,24), this is not an essential definition of God, but indicates God as the giver of the Spirit, just as he is indicated as the source of love in 1 Jn 4,8. Even such an affirmation as *ὁ θεός φῶς ἐστιν* (1 Jn 1,5), which has been interpreted as a "Gottesprädikation", but wrongly (cf. O. Schaefer, "'Gott ist Licht', 1 Joh 1,5. Inhalt und Tragweite des Wortes", *TSKrit* 105 (1933) 467-476), is not to be found in Jn. We do not even find such passages as Mt 5,45; 6,25-34; Lk 6,35-38; 12,22-31. On the reticence of the NT to predicate attributes of God, cf. E. Stauffer, *TWNT* III, art. *θεός*, 112-113.

<sup>14</sup> When Jn uses the word *θεός*, it is most often to indicate some special relationship



about Jesus' unique relationship to him (about God's unique relationship to Jesus, but the accent is on Jesus' relationship to God). It is no mere chance that, of all the books of the NT, it is only in the Fourth Gospel that the word *πατήρ* is found more frequently than *θεός*.<sup>15</sup> God, in Jn, is the Father, the Father not of all men,<sup>16</sup> not even of the disciples,<sup>17</sup> but of Jesus.<sup>18</sup> It is only Jesus who uses the word

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of Jesus to God, or God to Jesus. This happens about 44× out of 75; but see what is said further down about the way in which Jesus uses the word *θεός* to refer to the relationship of others to God.

<sup>15</sup> All the books of the NT, with the exception of Mt, use *θεός* much more frequently than *πατήρ*. In Jn the exact opposite is true. Mt seems to use both words with about the same frequency, but we must bear in mind that 19× out of 64 *πατήρ* refers to an earthly father. For Jn this is true only 17× out of 137. To the 137×, we must also add the 17 cases in which the formula *ὁ πέμψας με* occurs, since it is equivalent to *ὁ πατήρ*.

<sup>16</sup> The universal fatherhood of God, based on affinity of nature between God and man, is a thought which is found in Philo, Stoic, Hermetic, and Gnostic writings (cf. G. Schrenk, *TWNT* V, art. *πατήρ*, 954-959 for ref. and lit.), but which is foreign to Judaism and the OT. God is father not of all men, but of Israel, and this fatherhood is not "natural", it is the result of election and covenant (cf. G. Quell, *TWNT* V, art. *πατήρ*, 970, 2ff; 978ff (Schrenk); G. Fohrer, *TWNT* VIII, art. *υἱός*, 352-353 and 355, 27ff). As for individual Israelites, they are "sons of God" as members of the "chosen people" (cf. Moore, *Judaism*, II, 202-211). In Rabbinical literature we find two contrasting opinions: a) the Israelites are sons when they behave as such; b) their "sonship" does not depend upon their behaviour (cf. Sjöberg, *op. cit.*, 38-39; 65-66; Büchler, *op. cit.*, 77ff). The NT is faithful to the OT and Judaism. It does not speak of a "universal" or "natural" fatherhood for God. Mt and Lk speak of the fatherhood of God in relation to Israel, but insist that Israel can call God father only if it does the will of the Father (Mt 21,28-31; Lk 15,11-32). They thus adopt the view of R. Jehuda rather than that of R. Meir (see the texts quoted by Sjöberg, *op. cit.*, 38; 65-66). Jn avoids speaking of the "fatherhood" of God if not in relation to Christ. The idea of God's relationship to Israel, however, does occur at 8,39-47. As in Mt and Lk, Jn stresses the "ethical" aspect of sonship and furthermore gives it a strong christological character: if God were the Father of the Jews they would love Jesus; since they cannot hear the words of God they are not of God, but of the devil.

<sup>17</sup> The expression *πατήρ ὑμῶν* is found in Q (cf. Lk 12,30 = Mt 6,32; Lk 6,36 = Mt 5,48). Mk uses it only once (11,25). It is found in Lk (6,36; 12,30), even in his "Sondergut" (12,32), and very frequently in Mt (5,16.45.48; 6,1.8.9.14.15.26; etc.) who possibly multiplied the use of *ὑμῶν* for his own specific catechetical purposes (comp. Mt 10,10 and Lk 12,12; Mt 10,29 and Lk 12,6). In Q, as in the Synoptics, *ὑμῶν* refers to the disciples and the expression's "innerste Beziehung zur Christuswirklichkeit ist nie zu übersehen" (Schrenk, *TWNT* V, 988, 6f). Jn avoids both *πατήρ ὑμῶν* and *πατήρ σου* (for *πατήρ σου* cf. Mt 6,4.18, where the adjective does not refer to Jesus). Schrenk holds that *πατήρ ὑμῶν* is avoided because of the controversy with the Jews (cf. *TWNT* V, 1002-1003). In the opinion of the writer the reason is not polemical, but christological (as Schrenk himself infers, *ibid.*, 1003, 4ff). Precisely for polemical reasons *πατήρ ὑμῶν* could have been used of the disciples, thus transferring the notion of divine fatherhood to the new community. This is exactly what happens in the two

"Father" when speaking of God; the word is found almost exclusively on his lips.<sup>19</sup> In comparison with *πατήρ*, it is only rarely that Jesus refers to God as *θεός*.<sup>20</sup> Most of the time it is to indicate his origin (3,17.34; 6,46; 8,42; 16,7) or the origin of his words, works, glory, teaching (8,40.47; 9,3; 11,4.40; 7,17). It is obvious that to make the exclusive claim that he (his "words" and "works") is "of God" is equivalent to saying that God is his Father. In all the other instances in which Jesus uses the word *θεός*, he is speaking not of his relationship to God, but of the relationship of others to God (of God to others).<sup>21</sup> When Jesus

instances in which Jn uses the expression. Jn 8,42 is an unreal condition: *εἰ ὁ θεός πατήρ ὑμῶν ἦν* ...; at 20,17, after the resurrection Jesus can say that *his* Father is now also the Father of his disciples. On the "christological" stress laid by Jn on the fatherhood of God, see the following note.

<sup>18</sup> In Mk Jesus never uses *πατήρ μου* when speaking of God (but see 8,36 and 14,36). It is found in the so-called "Johannine logion" (Mt 11,27 = Lk 10,22) which could go back to Q. At any rate, although it is seldom in Lk (2,49; 24,49), it is often used by Mt (7,21; 8,21; 10,32.33; 12,50; 15,13; etc.). Jn uses the expression with the greatest frequency (about 35×; the text is often critically dubious). What is more important: even when the adj. is absent, *πατήρ* designates the Father of Jesus. This results from the context as well as from the overall perspective of the Fourth Gospel. God is the Father of Jesus in an exclusive fashion (see previous n.), as can be seen by the care with which Jn avoids calling the disciples *υἱοὶ (τοῦ) θεοῦ*, a title which is bestowed upon Christians by other NT writers (cf. Mt 5,9; (5,45); Lk 20,36; (6,35); Rom 8,14; Gal 3,26; Heb 12,7). Jn calls them *τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ* and specifies that they were "born of God", something he never affirms of Christ. Furthermore the "paternity" of God is mentioned only once in order to bring out the fact that one becomes a child of God only in the risen Son.

<sup>19</sup> The Prologue (1,14.18) uses the word "Father" (referring to God) twice. The Jews persecute Jesus because *he* called God his Father (5,18); at 8,27 the Jews do not realize that Jesus was speaking of *his* Father. At 8,19 the Jews ask: "Where is *your* Father?" and they claim that God is *their* Father (8,41), but Jesus denies their claim (cf. 8,54). At 13,1 it is Jesus who is the subject, although the evangelist is speaking. Thus, besides the two exceptions found in the Prologue, the only true exception is the question of Philip: "Show us *the* Father (14,8), question which is prompted by the affirmation of Jesus: "If you have come to know me, you will come to know *my* Father" (14,7).

<sup>20</sup> When others speak of Jesus' relation to God and his origin the word *θεός* is used (1,1.2.18a; 3,2(bis); 9,16.33; 13,3; 16,30).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. 3,16.21.33.36; 4,10.24; 5,42.44; 6,29.45; 8,42.54; 10,35; 12,43; 14,1; 16,2; 17,3. 8,54 is interesting in this respect. The Jews had said: "We have one *Father*: God" (8,41). Jesus denies this and then says: "*My Father* glorifies me, whom you say is *your God*". The only time Jesus refers to God as *θεός* is at 13,31-32, where he is speaking of the Son of man in the third person. Jn 20,17 is not a true exception and is required by the parallelism; the point is to indicate that "God" becomes the Father of the disciples just as he is the Father of Jesus. Similarly, at 6,27, the *ὁ θεός* at the end of the verse emphasizes that the Father of Jesus is God. We must point out, however, that Jesus does speak of the relationship of (his) Father to others (cf. 4,21.23; 6,45.46.65; etc.).

speaks of his relationship to God (with the exception of the formulas of "origin" just mentioned) the word *θεός* is not to be found.<sup>22</sup> Although Jesus speaks both about coming from God (*ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ*—8,42; *παρά (τοῦ) θεοῦ*—16,27) and from the Father (*παρά τοῦ πατρὸς*—16,28),<sup>23</sup> we never find such expressions as : *ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ θεός ἐν ἑσμεν* (cf. 10,30), *ὁ ἑωρακώς ἐμὲ ἑώρακεν τὸν θεόν* (cf. 14,9), *ὁ θεός ἐν ἐμοὶ μένων ποιεῖ τὰ ἔργα* (cf. 14,10), *καθὼς γινώσκει με ὁ θεός καὶ γὰρ γινώσκω τὸν θεόν* (cf. 10,15).

Because Jesus "speaks" (reveals God) in virtue of his unique relationship to God, it is the name "Father" which expresses the essence of what he has to reveal about God.<sup>24</sup> This alone explains why Jesus "speaks" of (reveals) God as (his) Father by speaking about his own person. If the *Ich-Stil* is characteristic of Jn<sup>25</sup> and if Jesus speaks about his own person much more often than in the Synoptics,<sup>26</sup> it is because he *must* do so in order to speak about God (his Father). When Jesus speaks about himself, it is invariably with reference to the (his) Father (God).<sup>27</sup>

<sup>22</sup> With the exception of his origin and that of his works, words, teaching, Jesus speaks of his personal relationship to the Father, not to God. Jn 6,46 brings out the difference : *ὁ ὢν παρά τοῦ θεοῦ* (formula of origin) *ἑώρακεν τὸν πατέρα* (interpersonal relation).

<sup>23</sup> When using the particle *ἐκ* to indicate Jesus' specific origin from God, Jn uses *ἐκ (τοῦ) θεοῦ*, not *ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς*. This has escaped the attention of both Dodd (cf. *Interpretation*, 259) and O. Cullmann (*The Christology of the New Testament* (London, 1963), 298). Dodd (*ibid.*, loc. cit.) quotes 16,28 as reading : *ἐξήλθεν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς*, but the best MSS have : *ἐξήλθεν παρά τοῦ πατρὸς*. Although the other lesson is possible, internal criticism favours the latter. 16,28 would be the only instance in Jn where Jesus is said to come *ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς* (*ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς* is found only once, at 10,32, where the *ἔργα* are said to be *ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς*). We therefore believe that Jn affirms that Jesus' specific origin is *from God* (*ἐκ (τοῦ) θεοῦ*), although he speaks of Jesus' being "from" the Father, sent by the Father, etc., (on the difference between *παρά*, *ἀπὸ* and *ἐκ* cf. Dodd, *op. cit.*, 259-60).

<sup>24</sup> The texts are legion. Cf., e.g., mission—5,43; 6,27; 10,36; 8,28; teaching—14,24; 12,49f; activity—5,19f; 5,17; 10,37; 14,10; obedience—4,34; 5,30; 6,38ff; 8,29; life—5,21f; 6,57; 5,26; power—3,35; 10,29; 13,3; 17,2; etc.

<sup>25</sup> This is confirmed by Morgenthaler's statistics, which give :

|                                           | Mt  | Mk  | Lk  | Jn  |
|-------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| <i>ἐγὼ</i> .....                          | 28  | 16  | 22  | 132 |
| <i>καὶ γὰρ</i> .....                      | 9   | 0   | 6   | 30  |
| <i>ἐγὼ, ἐμοῦ, μοῦ, ἐμοί, μοί, ἐμέ, μέ</i> | 210 | 104 | 215 | 465 |

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Lagrange, *clixf*.

<sup>27</sup> Whether Jesus uses *ἐγὼ*, speaking in the first person, or *υἱός*, speaking in the third person, he invariably refers to the Father when speaking of his own person. The *ἐγὼ εἰμι* formulas present the same outlook, even though they may seem to call attention to the person of Jesus as such. The *ἐγὼ εἰμι* formulas with a predicate nominative can all be reduced to the one : *ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ζωὴ* (cf. the exegesis of the relevant passages—6,35.51; 8,12; 10,7.9; 10,11.14; 11,25; 14,6; 15,1.5—given by F. Mussner, *ZNH. Die Anschauung vom Leben im vierten Evangelium unter Berücksichtigung der Johannesbriefe* (München, 1952), esp. 101-111; 148-152; 158-163; 165-171; on 14,6 : I. de la Potterie, "Je suis la Voie, la Vérité et la Vie" (Jn 14,6)", *NRT* 88 (1966) 907-942, esp. 917 and

In examining what it is that Jesus has to "speak" or "say" we come to the conclusion that he has absolutely nothing to communicate if we abstract from the revelation of his own person in its relationship to the Father. This, and nothing else, is the object both of his λαλεῖν<sup>28</sup> (λόγος, ῥήματα) and μαρτυρεῖν. Λαλεῖν and μαρτυρεῖν are both terms of revelation.

c) *Testifying to (speaking of) what one has seen and heard—a metaphor for "revealing". The Apocalyptic background*

The "revelatory" nature of μαρτυρεῖν is given not only because it is used interchangeably with λαλεῖν and has the mystery of Christ's person as object; the very expressions, "I testify (μαρτυρεῖν) to what I have seen and heard, to the truth", which seem to go contrary to taking μαρτυρεῖν as a term of revelation, point in the same direction.

The background of such expressions is that of the Jewish Apocalyptic literature. The studies of Grether and de la Potterie allow us to be brief on this point.

Already in the OT "vision" and "audition" occupy a central place as revelation media.<sup>29</sup> In such books as Zechariah and Daniel, which are Apocalyptic writings, they are the most important media of revelation. They are commonly used as such in other Apocalyptic writings of Judaism. It is in this literature that the verbs "to see" and "to hear" are found used in close connection, as they are in Jn. Cases abound in which Henoch, Ezra, Metraton "see" visions which they do

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929). If we consider this affirmation in the light of such texts as 5,21.26; 6,57, we immediately perceive that, if Jesus is the Life, it is because of the Father. With the absolute use of ἐγὼ εἰμι (see above, pp. 59ff) we come back once again to the relationship of Jesus to the Father. Jesus is God not as a God beside God, but as the Son of God. The two titles are complementary and, to some extent at least, identical (cf. Cullmann, *Christology*, 270; 299-303; 306ff).

<sup>28</sup> The term λαλεῖν is itself a term of revelation. In the LXX the verb λαλεῖν is already strongly bound to revelation. It designates the transmission of the revealed word by the prophets (cf. Dupont, *Gnosis*, 220-230). In Acts τὸν λόγον λαλεῖν becomes a technical term for the "Missionspredigt" and λαλεῖν is used for the transmission of the Gospel message (4,29.31; 8,25; 11,19f; 13,46; 14,25; 16,6.32; and 2,31; 4,20; 10,44; 14,1; etc. Jn (vs. Acts) uses λαλεῖν for the *first* revelation, not for the transmission of the revealed word). Jn gives great importance to the verb λαλεῖν (cf. de la Potterie, *Altheia*, 8ff). In the great majority of cases it is Jesus who "speaks" (λαλεῖν)—48 × out of 58—or the verb refers in some way to the person of Jesus and contains the idea of revelation. At Jn 1,37 it is used of John the Baptist, who comes to reveal (manifest) Jesus; at 9,29 and 12,41 we are dealing with high points of OT revelation; at 12,29 it is an angel who "speaks" to Jesus (in reality the voice from heaven, the Bath Qol). Only very rarely is the verb used in connection with ordinary discourse. When used in conjunction with the word of Jesus, the revelatory nature of this word is often stressed (3,11.34; 4,26; 6,63; 7,17.18; 8,26.28.38.40; 12,48-50; 14,10; etc.).

<sup>29</sup> For a more exhaustive exposition of the role vision and audition play in the OT and for references, cf. O. Grether, *Name und Wort Gottes im Alten Testament* (Giessen, 1934), 86-99 and, further, A. Robert, *DBS* V, art. "Logos", 450-463.

not understand until they "hear" the explanatory "word" which reveals their meaning. The angel interprets (reveals) the sense of what is seen (Dan 10,11) through words (4 Esd 5,32; 7,2; 2 Bar 6,6; 56,1; Ass Mos 7,8; 11,1) and this role is called to announce the "truth" (Dan 11,2).

When Jn speaks of the "truth" Jesus has heard, of the "things" he has seen and heard with the Father and to which he bears witness or which he speaks, he is borrowing a mode of expression from the Jewish Apocalyptic literature. De la Potterie<sup>30</sup> has proven conclusively that this language does not derive from Gnosticism, as Bultmann would have it. In none of the texts quoted by Bultmann is it said that the divine messenger comes to reveal what he has seen and heard with God and none of these texts call this revelation "truth". On the contrary, parallels are frequent in the Jewish Apocalyptic.

This metaphorical language has been retained by Jn, but has been emptied of its content. Jesus bears witness to no divine "mysteries"; he speaks neither of "visions" which he saw nor of "words" of explanation which he heard. The object of Jesus' μαρτυρεῖν and λαλεῖν is the mystery of his own person, even though we are at times given the impression that he speaks of something foreign to his person (ἀ ἐώρακεν, ἀ ἤκουσεν, ἡ ἀλήθεια). The language borrowed from Apocalyptic literature proves incapable of rendering what Jn wishes to express precisely because Jesus is the revelation he has come to bring. The same phenomenon is observable in the Johannine use of λόγος. Jn was obliged to speak as if Jesus were transmitting a "word" which he received from the Father<sup>31</sup> and then correct this by tending to identify the "word" with the person of Christ.<sup>32</sup>

Jn was forced to separate the inseparable. Jesus speaks of and testifies to "what he has heard", yet he only speaks of and testifies to himself in his relationship to the Father. He speaks of and testifies to "what he has seen"—and here the language breaks down completely. If Jn can speak as if what Jesus "heard" are the words he speaks, he cannot speak as if Jesus were describing what he has seen. The only thing Jesus has seen is the Father<sup>33</sup> and he can be seen only in Jesus, not because Jesus allows us to see him vicariously by telling us about him.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> *Art. cit.*, *StudEv* I, 292-294; *Alētheia*, 1-7; 33ff.

<sup>31</sup> See what has been said above, pp. 197ff.

<sup>32</sup> This takes place in two ways: a) What is predicated of Jesus' word is predicated of Jesus himself (comp. 6,63; 17,17 and 14,6; 5,24 and 11,25; 12,48; 17,8 and 1,12; 5,43; 12,48; 15,4-7; 5,22.27 and 12,48/. Cf. Bultmann (*Theologie*, 416), who adds that the "words" of Jesus can be the object of faith just as his person is. The parallelism is not so complete as Bultmann (*ibid.*, 423) would have it (see what has been said above, pp. 145f). b) Although Jn identifies the λόγος with Christ only in the Prologue, he never writes that Jesus speaks or preaches the "word" (λόγος used absolutely, is never found outside the Prologue) because Jesus is the word (on the other hand Jesus is called the "Word" only in the Prologue because the Word-made-flesh speaks in history; the Word is now present in the spoken "word" of Jesus). Cf. Kittel, *TWNT* IV, 131f.

<sup>33</sup> At 5,19 Jesus says that he does what he saw the Father doing. The language, here again, is metaphorical and is probably a "hidden parable". Cf. C. H. Dodd, "Une parabole cachée dans le quatrième Évangile", *RHPR* 42 (1962) 107-115.

<sup>34</sup> Jesus has "seen" the Father (6,46). Does this mean Jesus can reveal the Father

The fact that Jesus has seen the Father is of no relevance if not as an indication of the unique dignity of Jesus' person. One sees the Father in Jesus because Jesus is the perfect manifestation of the Father.<sup>35</sup>

d) *The subject of μαρτυρεῖν in the specific Johannine sense*

We have already examined those cases in which "facts" with religious overtones are the object of testimony; we distinguished this usage from that which is specifically Johannine, where the object is invariably *the person of Jesus*. When μαρτυρεῖν is used in this specific sense the subject is Jesus (3,11.32; 5,31; 8,13.14.18.18,37), the Father (5,32.37; 8,18), the Spirit (15,26), the ἔργα (5,36; 10,25), the Scriptures (5,39). If men are called to testify, this prerogative is reserved for John the Baptist (1,7.8.15.(19).32.34; 3,26; 5,33) and the disciples of Jesus (15,27.19,35; 21,24).

As for μαρτυρία, it is an act of Jesus (3,11.32.33; 5,31; 8,13.14), of the Father (5,32), or is the μαρτυρία of the ἔργα (5,36). If men are qualified to bear witness, it is only the Baptist (1,7.19) or the disciples (15,27; 19,35; 21,24).

Being a term of revelation, μαρτυρεῖν (μαρτυρία) is proper to God alone. It is the testimony of the Father which is present in the Scriptures, the ἔργα; the testimony of the Father and Jesus which is present in that of the Spirit. It is also obvious that, being the Revealer, μαρτυρεῖν and μαρτυρία should be found in the great majority of cases to refer to the testimony (revelatory activity) of Jesus.

But what of the Baptist and the disciples? The Baptist is presented by Jn as the beneficiary of divine revelation. He testifies to what has been revealed to him (1,33) and it is this revelation which gives (relative) value to his testimony. He is a Christian "avant la lettre". The disciples are in somewhat the same position, except that what has been revealed to them has been revealed by Christ (although their faith is the "work" of God). They too can bear witness in virtue of Christ's "word" being in them and their union with the Father and the Son in the Spirit.

e) *The difference between μαρτυρεῖν and λαλεῖν*

We have already pointed out that μαρτυρεῖν, μαρτυρία, with the Father, Jesus, the Scriptures, the ἔργα or the disciples as subject, is used simply with περὶ ἐμοῦ, ἐμῶν, σεαυτοῦ and left undefined.<sup>36</sup> It is the whole "work" the Father gave

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because he has seen him, or does it mean that "seeing the Father" implies that Jesus has a unique relationship to him and therefore can reveal him? 1) Jn never states that Jesus can reveal the Father because he has seen him. In the Prologue (v. 18), after θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε, the thought breaks off. Jn does not continue: εἰ μὴ ὁ μονογενὴς θεὸς καὶ ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο. If Jesus leads to God it is as ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς. 2) The statement, "He who has seen me has seen the Father", leads in another direction; the perfect unity of Father and Son makes it possible to see the Father in Jesus.

<sup>35</sup> This has been correctly seen by W. Michaelis, *TWNT* V, art. ὁράω, 364.

<sup>36</sup> Only at 5,36 do we have: τὰ ἔργα ... μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἐμοῦ ὅτι ὁ πατήρ με ἀπέσταλκεν.

Jesus to accomplish (his *ἔργον*, and his *λαλεῖν* in particular) which makes explicit the *μαρτυρία*, borne to him by the Father and which Jesus bears to himself. The *λαλεῖν* of Jesus determines what he claims to be, that to which he bears witness.

It is significant that the (*μαρτυρία*) of the Baptist, contrary to that of Jesus (of the Spirit and of the disciples) and of the Father (of the *ἔργα* and of the Scriptures), is always further qualified.<sup>37</sup> The *μαρτυρεῖν* of Jesus and the Father is that of Jesus' "word(s)" and "works", the "work" of revelation. This is reserved for the Father, the Son and the Spirit (to the disciples in dependence upon them).<sup>38</sup>

But the major difference is that *μαρτυρεῖν* brings out the juridical aspect of Jesus' *λαλεῖν*; *λαλεῖν* not being a juridical term. Strathmann has shown that the terms *μάρτυς*, *μαρτυρεῖν*, *μαρτυρία*, have their origin in the "Rechtsleben", both in profane Greek<sup>39</sup> and in the LXX.<sup>40</sup> The juridical meaning is also found in the NT.<sup>41</sup> *Μαρτυρεῖν* and *μαρτυρία* stress the juridical dimension revelation assumes in the Gospel of St. John.

<sup>37</sup> Jn 1,15: the object is the pre-existence of Christ; Jn 1,32-34 (the *ἐμαρτύρησεν* ... *μεμαρτύρηκα* forms an inclusion): the Baptist testifies *ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*; at 1,7,8 he testifies to Christ as the (true) light coming into the world (comp. 1,19). If Jn 3,26 simply reads *ὦ σὺ μεμαρτύρηκας*, this *μαρτυρία* refers back to that contained in Jn 1,19-28 (1,19: *αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία τοῦ Ἰωάννου*, 1,28: *ταῦτα ἐν Βεθανίᾳ ἐγένετο πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου* correspond to 3,26: *ὅς ἦν μετὰ σοῦ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου ᾧ σὺ μεμαρτύρηκας* and 3,28 refers to the *μαρτυρία* of 1,20) where the Baptist testified that Jesus is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit (1,33), the Son of God (1,34). Jn 5,33 *μεμαρτύρηκεν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ* is a summary of all John's activity, for his whole person is there only to bear witness to Christ (*ἦλθεν εἰς μαρτυρίαν ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ* 1,7). He testified to the "truth", that is to say, he testified to Christ insofar as he is the fulness of revelation (*ἐγὼ εἰμι ... ἡ ἀλήθεια* 14,6). Although Jn considered the Baptist a "confessor" and gave him a part to play in revealing Christ to Israel, his "testimony" has not completely lost the appearance of that of the "forerunner", who announces something "new" and therefore does not simply testify to Christ (*περὶ αὐτοῦ*) but explicitly states that to which he bears witness.

<sup>38</sup> The work of revelation in Jn is the "work" of Jesus and the Father. It is also the "work" of the Spirit. Although the Spirit brings no new revelation, his coming inaugurates a "second moment" of revelation by "leading" the disciples into the fulness of truth. Cf. de la Potterie, *Alētheia*, 181-208; O. Betz, *Der Paraklet. Fürsprecher im häretischen Spätjudentum, im Johannesevangelium und in neu gefundenen gnostischen Schriften* (Leiden-Köln, 1963), 176-191. As for the disciples, they participate indirectly in the work of revelation since it is through their word that men are led to believe in Jesus (cf. 17,20) and the work of the Spirit is set forth in them.

<sup>39</sup> *TWNT* IV, 479-480.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 486.

<sup>41</sup> *Μάρτυς* is used in the "technical" juridical sense: witnesses before a tribunal (Mk 14,63 = Mt 26,65; Act 6,13; 7,58—comp. 1 Tim 5,19; 2 Cor 13,1). Contrary to *μαρτυρία*, which is also found in the strictly "juridical" sense (Mk 14,55.56.59; Lk 22,71), *μαρτυρεῖν* is not used in the sense of "bearing witness before a tribunal" (cf. *TWNT* IV, 500, 35ff). We have seen that Preiss has accused Strathmann of having neglected the religious aspect of *μαρτυρεῖν* and given too much importance to the "juridical" aspect.

Because of the antagonistic setting in which it takes place, revelation in Jn takes on the character of a "witnessing". As an act of revelation, *μαρτυρεῖν* has primarily a positive meaning. It should lead to the recognition of the "truth" and to salvation. However, like *κρίνειν*, with which it is intimately related, it takes on, secondarily and through the fault of men, a "negative" connotation.

The "world" sits in judgement over Jesus and demands that he produce "testimony" to substantiate his claims or that he accept to be rejected and condemned as an impostor. Jesus (viz., the Spirit and, in dependence upon Jesus and the Spirit, the disciples) and the Father (viz., the Scriptures, the *ἔργα* and John the Baptist in dependence upon the Father) bear witness that he is "truthful" and produce a testimony (for the testimony of the Father is, ultimately, identical with that of Jesus) which the world does not accept. The rejection of this testimony becomes a source of condemnation for the "world"; Jesus' witnessing in favour of the "truth" becomes a testimony against the "world's" falsehood and evil works (7,7; 3,19ff).

It is not surprising that *λαλεῖν* and *μαρτυρεῖν* should be so closely related to *κρίνειν*. Judgement is the outcome of the self-revelation of Jesus (*λαλεῖν*, *μαρτυρεῖν*); it is even more closely bound to his *μαρτυρεῖν* than to his *λαλεῖν*, since *μαρτυρεῖν* expresses the "juridical" aspect of this revelation.

### Conclusion

The opinion of Strathmann demands the following correctives :

- 1) Although the idea of "werbendes Bekenntnis" is no doubt present in the idea of *μαρτυρεῖν* insofar as the "truth", as "testified to", presents itself as worthy of acceptance,
- 2) the term in Jn is to be related not so much to the vocabulary of the "kerygma" as to that of revelation.
- 3) It is furthermore to be situated within the "juridical" perspective, proper to the Fourth Gospel.

## 2. THE REJECTION OF JESUS BY THE JEWS AND THE "HEILSGESCHICHTE"—JN 5,31-47

Jn 5,31-47 follows immediately upon the great revelation discourse contained in 5,19-30 (itself an elaboration of the statement made at 5,17), in which Jesus "testifies" (reveals) that he is the giver of life and the judge (in unity with the Father). It is a "Verteidigungsrede" the historical value of which can hardly be over-estimated, for it presents itself (especially in the first part, vv. 31-40) as a compilation

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If we have read Strathmann correctly, the accusation is ill-founded. Strathmann stresses the "juridical" aspect of *μαρτυρεῖν*—over against the "religious" aspect, but when it comes to Jn, he stresses the "religious" aspect of *μαρτυρεῖν* (*ibid.*, 504, 10f) and *μαρτυρία* (*ibid.*, 506, 12f) and completely neglects the "juridical" aspect.



of "testimonia" which reflects the practice of missionary apologetics in the early Church.<sup>42</sup>

Jn 5,31-47 is generally accepted as a unit, which is subdivided into two subsections: vv. 31-40 and vv. 41-47.<sup>43</sup> The new unit (5,31-47) is marked by the change from the third person (the Son: vv. 19-30) to the first person (ἐγώ: vv. 30-47). Although in the first person, v. 30 does not belong to the new section (vv. 31-47), but is the conclusion of the previous unit (vv. 19-30). *Οὐ δύναμαι* (v. 30) forms an inclusion with *οὐ δύναται* (v. 19). The thematic content is different in the two sections, for vv. 19-30 deal with the theme of *κρίσις*, vv. 31-40 with that of *μαρτυρία*. V. 30, which speaks of the *κρίσις* of Jesus, thus belongs to the previous section.

The reasons for considering vv. 41-47 a subsection will be given when we deal with these verses.

A) *Jesus appeals to the revelation of God in (past) history—to the Baptist, to the ἔργα, to OT revelation and to the Scriptures (Torah) in particular—as a μαρτυρία the Father bore to him—Jn 5,31-40*

Before giving a division of our section, which has *μαρτυρία* as its "Stichwort" and appears as a direct justification of what was said in vv. 19-30, there are two preliminary observations which must be made. V. 32 raises a problem. If ἄλλος refers to God, the verse belongs to the introduction; if ἄλλος refers to the Baptist, the verse does not belong to the introduction, but is the first "witness" adduced. We adopt the former view which, to our mind, gives the best sense and suits the immediate and general contexts much better.<sup>44</sup> The second difficulty is raised by vv. 37-38. Is the testimony of the Father that of the Scriptures or are we dealing with two distinct testimonies: that of the Father given on Mount Sinai and that of the Scriptures? We believe, as we shall endeavour to show, that the *μεμαρτύρηκεν* of the Father refers specifically to OT revelation (Sinai) and is distinct (although inseparable) from that of the Scriptures (which are however also conceived of as a *μαρτυρία* of the Father).

We may now propose the following division:

<sup>42</sup> Cf. W. Bauer, ad 5,40; Dodd, *Interpretation*, 330; *Hist. Trad.*, 296-297.

<sup>43</sup> So Bultmann, Bernard, Barrett, Lagrange, Brown, Westcott.

<sup>44</sup> See below, pp. 210f; 216f; 229f.

Introduction : Jesus does not bear witness to himself, there is "another" (God) who bears witness to him—vv. 31-32.

- a) The testimony of the Baptist—vv. 33-35.
- b) The testimony of the ἑρπυα—v. 36.
- c) The testimony given (by the Father) to Moses and Israel on Mount Sinai (OT revelation)—vv. 37-38.
- d) The testimony of the Scriptures—vv. 39.(40).

*Introduction : Jesus does not bear witness to himself, there is another—the Father—who bears witness to him—vv. 31-32*

We have considered vv. 31f to be "introductory". They form an inseparable unit, as the antithetical parallelism indicates.

It is unquestionable that v. 31 "formally" contradicts Jn 8,14. Is it necessary to suppose that this is due to the fact that the Gospel was not fully revised by its author <sup>45</sup> or that the verses are due to two different editors ? <sup>46</sup>

It is typical of Jn to use apparent contradictions in order to draw the reader's attention to a deeper truth.<sup>47</sup> Jn simply wishes to show that a number of "witnesses" (all to be traced back to that of the Father) testify to Jesus. Later on, he will attempt to show in what way Jesus' μαρτυρία to himself is valid. The principle recalled at Jn 8,13, according to which no one can testify on his own behalf,<sup>48</sup> is not explicitly mentioned here, but there is an implicit reference to this principle.<sup>49</sup> Jesus takes for granted that such a principle exists, concedes implicitly that it is valid and does not claim to be an exception. He consequently adduces the testimony of "another".

A tradition which goes back to Chrysostom <sup>50</sup> would refer ἄλλος to the Baptist. The moderns <sup>51</sup> prefer the view of Cyprian,<sup>52</sup> which refers ἄλλος to the Father. There can be no doubt that Cyprian was right. Jn (Jesus) would hardly consider one whose testimony he

<sup>45</sup> Barrett, ad 5,31.

<sup>46</sup> Brown, ad loc., 224.

<sup>47</sup> We have only to think of the use of κρῖνειν in 3,17; 5,22; 8,15.16 and 9,39.

<sup>48</sup> On the idea of self-witnessing not being acceptable, cf. *Str.-Bill.*, II, 466; 522.

<sup>49</sup> The implicit reference should not be overstressed, but it is certainly behind Jesus' words; cf. 8,13.

<sup>50</sup> *Hom. in Jo.* XL, 1 (*P.G.* 59, 230). Thomas (*op. cit.*, ad loc.) mentions the view that "another" is God, but says of Chrysostom's interpretation : "magis est literalis".

<sup>51</sup> Loisy, Westcott, Lagrange, Bernard, Barrett, Brown.

<sup>52</sup> *Epist.* LXVI (II), 2 (*C.S.E.L.* 32 .727).

(Jesus) himself mentions only as a concession and as of no determining importance (vv. 34-36) to be the "other" indispensable witness whose "testimony" Jesus knows to be "truthful". Furthermore, as we have seen, vv. 31-32 form a unit and v. 31 is clearly introductory. Only the meaning ἄλλος = God suits the introductory nature of v. 31. The witness of the "other" embraces all the subsequent witnesses, since they can all be traced back to this one witness.

In our view, Jn purposefully left the ἄλλος indeterminate in order to gradually build up to the climax: καὶ ὁ ... πατὴρ ἐκείνος μεμαρτύρηκεν (v. 37). From the testimony of a "man" (v. 34: ἄνθρωπος) "sent by God" (ἄνθρωπος ἀπεσταλμένος παρὰ θεοῦ Jn 1,6), we pass to the testimony of the ἔργα, accomplished by Jesus and "given" by God (ἔργα ἃ δέδωκεν μοι ὁ πατήρ v. 36; comp. 9,3f), to the testimony the Father himself gave (καὶ ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ ἐκείνος μεμαρτύρηκεν v. 37). Basically, all the testimonies can be traced back to the one μαρτυρῶν: it is the Father, already veiledly present in the ἄλλος of v. 32.

Both ὁ μαρτυρῶν and μαρτυρεῖ in v. 32 stress the continuous, abiding nature of this testimony. Jesus knows<sup>53</sup> that this testimony is truthful. The following verses will show that the Jews, on the contrary, do not know (understand) the nature and value of the Father's μαρτυρία.

#### a) *The testimony of the Baptist—vv. 33-35*

Jesus refers to the testimony of the Baptist. This does not come as a surprise since, in Jn, the figure of the Baptist is essentially that of a witness to Christ (cf. 1,19.26f).

John μεμαρτύρηκεν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ. This expression, coined by Jn<sup>54</sup> is used only of the Baptist and Jesus (18,37). It places us, more than μαρτυρεῖν περί ..., in a forensic and juridical context. Jesus and the Baptist are the only ones who testified in a direct confrontation with the hostile Jews and it is in such a confrontation that Jesus refers

<sup>53</sup> Οἶδα is to be preferred to οἶδαι not only on textual grounds (οἶδαι is supported only by  $\aleph^c$ , D) but because it is an obvious attempt to make the reasoning more cogent: "You know his (i.e., of the Baptist or perhaps: of God) testimony is truthful, therefore you must accept it".

<sup>54</sup> In a careful study of the expression μαρτυρεῖν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, de la Potterie (*Alētheia*, 45-53) has shown that it has no true parallel in the OT, Apocalyptic literature, Classical or Hellenistic Greek and not even in IQS 8,4-7, where the meaning is quite different.

to the Baptist's testimony. He testified "in favour of" <sup>55</sup> the truth—in order to induce belief, not in view of condemnation.<sup>56</sup> This "truth" is the messianic revelation in Christ.<sup>57</sup> John testified in the past <sup>58</sup> but the perfect stresses the abiding value of his testimony (μεμαρτύρηκεν). Jesus, however,<sup>59</sup> does not rely <sup>60</sup> on the testimony of a man, be it even the Baptist. He nevertheless mentions it, in view of his audience.

*The characteristic features of the Baptist's μαρτυρία as presented by Jn and its possible Sitz im Leben*

1) The μαρτυρία of John is presented as a fact which is both known and valued by those with whom Jesus is (presumably) speaking.  
2) The evangelist does not wish to stake too much on the testimony of John. In other words: the μαρτυρία of the Baptist carries more weight for the audience of Jesus (Jn) than it does for Jesus (Jn) himself.

The Synoptics present John as a witness to Christ, but Jn (or/and the tradition he was using) goes still further. He presents the Baptist as a Christian "avant la lettre" who recognizes Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, and "confesses" him publicly.<sup>61</sup>

In a meticulous study of the presentation of the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel, Dodd <sup>62</sup> has come to the conclusion that Jn was using material which came down to him from a tradition with a genuinely historical content, but that his tradition presents many points which cannot be reconciled with the Synoptic accounts of the Baptist and his ministry. The divergence, in all probability, is due to the fact "that the Fourth Evangelist is deeply committed to the view that the 'testimony of John' has a significant place in Christian apologetic".

<sup>55</sup> The dative is a dative of advantage.

<sup>56</sup> In the Qumran literature and in the Apocalyptic, "witnessing" is always in view of judgement (condemnation).

<sup>57</sup> Cf. de la Potterie, *op. cit.*, 51.

<sup>58</sup> Some authors have held that the perf. is an indication that John was dead when Jesus spoke these words. More probably the perf. is used because for Jn (and the Church) the testimony of the Baptist, like that of the OT revelation, is a thing of the past.

<sup>59</sup> There may be an opposition: ὑμεῖς ... ἐγὼ δέ (Bernard, Lagrange).

<sup>60</sup> The idea is not: "I do not need, I do not use", but rather: "I do not stake my claims on, rely upon"; rightly Lagrange, *ad loc.*

<sup>61</sup> Dodd, *Hist. Trad.*, 297-298.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 248-301.

This led Jn "to make the most of anything in his tradition which would support that view."<sup>63</sup>

But why was Jn (and the tradition he was using) so interested in the apologetic value of the "testimony of John" and why did he feel the need of exploiting the tradition he received so fully? It seems obvious, to begin with, that Jn has Jews in mind.<sup>64</sup> The *ὑμεῖς ἀπεστάλκατε* refers to the Jews (cf. 5,18-19 and comp. 1,19) and we can presume that the Jews contemporary to Jn would have been acquainted with John and his work, so that John's testimony should have carried some weight for them. But this is not sufficient to account for vv. 33-35. The manner in which the testimony of the Baptist is referred to indicates that those who are being addressed attach such great importance to the figure of the Baptist that the evangelist thinks it necessary to call attention to the relative value of his testimony. It is true that it heads the list of "testimonia", but this should not mislead us. Although it too is an expression of the Father's *μαρτυρία*, the "witnessing" of the Baptist comes as a sort of parenthesis.<sup>65</sup> It does not head the list as the first and greatest *μαρτυρία* of the Father. Twice the *ἐγὼ δέ* ... breaks in to remind the reader of the limitations and relative value of John's testimony (vv. 34,36) and the evangelist passes on to "the greater testimony": that of the *ἔργα*, OT revelation and the Scriptures. The Jews attach greater importance to the *μαρτυρία* of the Baptist than Jn himself (Jesus) does. It is this circumstance which leads the evangelist to stress the testimony of John (v. 34b) but, at the same time, to present it as inferior to other "testimonies" (v. 34a).

Jn could be thinking of and appealing to followers or admirers of the Baptist who either : 1) constitute a rival sect ; 2) do not constitute a rival sect, but have remained in the Jewish fold (are not Christians or are "hidden" Christians). The choice will not depend so much on

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 296.

<sup>64</sup> Act 13,16-41 contains a speech of Paul given to Jews in the Synagogue of Antioch and which wishes to exemplify the approach used by Paul when he spoke to the Jews (Haenchen). In this context the testimony of the Baptist is explicitly referred to. Haenchen holds that Lk had the followers of the Baptist in mind.

<sup>65</sup> Bultmann (198, n. 8) concludes that vv. 33-35 are an addition of the evangelist. He is right in pointing out that the relationship of 5,33-35 to 3,22ff is not considered by Jn (199, n. 1). We need not see in the perf. an allusion to the death of the Baptist. We are dealing with Christian apologetics in which the testimony of the Baptist is considered a thing of the past, although it retains abiding value.

what is said in the Fourth Gospel as on historical considerations (e.g., whether it can be proven that the followers of the Baptist opposed the disciples of Jesus).<sup>66</sup>

Dodd<sup>67</sup> draws a connection between those whom Jn (viz., the tradition he was using) is addressing and the followers of the Baptist we encounter in Act 18,24-19,7. This parallel is enlightening. It could be that Jn (his tradition) was trying to win over fellow-Jews who considered themselves disciples of the Baptist and who, while sympathetic towards Christianity, had not yet joined the Christian community. At any rate, it is not possible to hold that the reservations of Jn are due to the fact that "by the time the evangelist wrote, the appeal of the testimony of Jn no longer carried weight".<sup>68</sup> The testimony of the Baptist would have an appeal only for a restricted number (and this is one reason which led Jn to qualify the value of such a testimony), but for this number it has very great value.

The reservations of Jn are due to theological rather than to historical considerations. The testimony of the Baptist is the testimony of a *man*. In the Johannine perspective, even the testimony of the *ἐργα*, OT revelation and the Scriptures, which are, so to speak, no longer the testimony of man, are subordinated and considered inferior to the testimony *κατ' ἐξοχὴν*, which is given by the Father directly to the Son in the very testimony the Son bears to himself. We shall return to this point.

We may conclude that vv. 33-35 are an appeal to a restricted number of Jews, followers or admirers of the Baptist and—secondarily—to all those who were acquainted with the figure of John and his message.<sup>69</sup>

The witness Jesus claims (v. 36: *τὴν μαρτυρίαν*—the definite article refers back to the *ἡ μαρτυρία ἣν μαρτυρεῖ* of v. 32) is far superior to that which the Baptist gave,<sup>70</sup> as valid as it might have

<sup>66</sup> A discussion of this point would go beyond our present scope.

<sup>67</sup> *Hist. Trad.*, 300.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 299.

<sup>69</sup> It should be noted that the figure of John and his activity was important enough to be mentioned by Josephus (*Ant.* XVIII, 5, 2). If we are to believe the Synoptics and Mk especially (cf. Mt 21,24; Mk 11,32; Lk 20,6) John was considered a prophet by the people, although the High Priests and Scribes were not of this opinion (cf. E. Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (Göttingen, 31962), ad Mt 21,24; 306).

<sup>70</sup> *Μεῖζω* is acc., not nom. Were it nom., the sense would be: "I, who am greater than John ..." With the acc. one could also interpret: "I have a testimony greater

been. The witness of the Father, after the quasi-digression of vv. 32-33, is again mentioned, so as to associate it more closely with the "testimonia" which follow—not only with the *ἔργα*, but also with OT revelation and the Scriptures.

The appeal to the "works" of Jesus and to the Scriptures were the constitutive elements of early Christian apologetics. The perspective is to be found in Jn 5,36-39, although Jn's presentation is, as usual, quite distinctive.

b) *The μαρτυρία of the ἔργα—v. 36*

In considering the charges of violation of the Sabbath (Jn 5 and 9), of blasphemy (Jn 10,22ff), that Jesus is an enemy of the Jewish nation (Jn 11,47ff) and the words of Nicodemus (Jn 7,51), the *ἔργα* of Jesus were seen to constitute an obstacle the Jews were unable to overcome, indicating the righteousness of Jesus' claims, as they did, and manifesting the blindness and ill-faith of the Jews. The same perspective dominates Jn 5,36: the *ἔργα* testify to Jesus.

The expression *τὰ ἔργα ἃ δέδωκέν μοι ὁ πατήρ ἵνα τελειώσω αὐτά* recalls 4,34 and 17,4 and probably refers back to 5,20.<sup>71</sup> Our section (5,31-40) follows immediately upon 5,19-30 and this section deals with the continuous activity of God in which the Son shares and which may be summed up in the *μειζονα ἔργα*: *κρίσις* and *ζωοποιήσις*. We should therefore beware of restricting the *ἔργα* to "miracles",<sup>72</sup> but rather refer the term to the whole of Jesus' activity,<sup>73</sup> both "works" and "words". Although, according to Thüsing, the *ἔργα* of 5,36 embrace the works of the earthly Jesus and of the Exalted, the accent is on the earthly work (*τελειώσω*);<sup>74</sup> we would add: on the earthly work as visible manifestation of God's power acting in Jesus. This seems to be demanded by the "apologetical" character of Jn 5,31-40. Witnesses are being adduced which even the Jews cannot dismiss (in their exterior, visible reality). For this reason we also believe that the *σημεῖα* of Jesus are very much present in the mind of the author.<sup>75</sup>

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than that John had" (Zahn, W. Bauer, Odeberg). But John is himself a witness! Rightly Bultmann, Bernard, Loisy, Lagrange, Barrett, Brown.

<sup>71</sup> *Ἔργα* occurs only in these two places in the whole of ch. 5.

<sup>72</sup> Brown (ad loc., 224) seems to stress the meaning "miracles" too much.

<sup>73</sup> Bultmann; Loisy (413); Lagrange; Dodd (329); Hoskyns.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 60-62.

<sup>75</sup> Comp. 9,16.31-33. Jesus uses the term *σημεῖα* only at 4,48 and 6,26, where Jn

That these "works" are "given" to Jesus by the Father means that his works are the works of God himself, that their activity is identical. By giving Jesus these works (the work) to bring to perfection, the Father testifies that Jesus is his Son—the "judge" and "giver of life". The apologetic perspective is not inconsistent with the situation which prevailed during Jesus' lifetime, but we once again seem to be in the time of the Church. The *σημεῖα* of Jesus, his whole *ἔργον* (his resurrection in particular) are being cited as "testimony" which should induce the Jews to accept that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, the Son of God.

c) *The testimony given (by the Father) to Moses and Israel on Mount Sinai (OT revelation)—vv. 37-38*

These verses are those which present the greatest difficulty and which are of the greatest interest to the theme we are treating.

#### *Structure*

V. 37a : The Father himself has testified to Jesus

37b : but the Jews : — have never heard his voice (*φωνή*)  
— have never seen his form (*εἶδος*)

38a : — and do not have his word (*λόγος*)  
abiding in them

38b : as is evidenced by the fact that (because) they do not believe  
in the one whom he sent.

#### *Exegesis*

V. 37a. The main issue is the nature of the testimony the Father has borne to Jesus.<sup>76</sup> We can immediately eliminate a reference to the Baptism or Transfiguration scenes.<sup>77</sup> Jn does not report the Trans-

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is having him look at the *ἔργα* from the point of view of his audience : "You saw ..."; "Unless you see ..." These are, significantly, the only two instances we could find in which the word "works" (= *σημεῖα* — *ἔργα*) is found as object in a direct discourse of Jesus which has a third party as subject; e.g., "You saw ... works" (= *σημεῖα*) vs. "I have shown you ... works" (= *ἔργα*, not *σημεῖα*—cf. 10,32).

<sup>76</sup> The answer to this question will determine the nature of the *λόγος* in v. 38a.

<sup>77</sup> Chrysostom suggests that vv. 37,38 refer to the voice from heaven heard at Jesus' baptism (Mk 1,11, Par). Thomas also mentions this possibility, together with that of the transfiguration (Mt 17,5).



figuration and there is no voice from heaven in his account of the Baptism. The visible manifestation is there for the Baptist alone—it is the foundation of *his* testimony. This possibility, is quite justly, not taken into serious consideration by any modern exegete.<sup>78</sup> There are only two possibilities which deserve serious consideration. The first is that the *μαρτυρία* is that of the Scriptures;<sup>79</sup> the second is that (interpreted in the light of 1 Jn 5,9f) it is the direct, internal testimony possessed by those who believe.<sup>80</sup>

The most striking thing about the assertion: *ὁ πατήρ ... μεμαρτύρηκεν* is that the perfect is used, rather than the present. V. 32 had stressed the present, continuous testimony of the Father: *ἄλλος ἐστὶν ὁ μαρτυρῶν περὶ ἐμοῦ ... ἡ μαρτυρία ἣν μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἐμοῦ*. Now we have: *ὁ πέμφας με πατήρ ... μεμαρτύρηκεν περὶ ἐμοῦ*. The contrast is all the more striking when one recalls that, in a similar controversy with the Jews at Jn 8,18, Jesus will affirm: *μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἐμοῦ ὁ πέμφας με πατήρ*, which is the exact wording of v. 37a, except that the subject is placed after the verb for stylistic reasons. A survey of the use of *μαρτυρεῖν* and *μαρτυρία* in the Fourth Gospel confirms the singularity of the *μεμαρτύρηκεν* of v. 37a. Outside of this instance, witnessing for Jn is always a thing of the present; it is considered a past act (with enduring effect) only in the case of the Baptist and of the evangelist.<sup>81</sup> What has led Jn, in this one

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Hoskyns, Lagrange, Brown, Bernard, Barrett, who reject this view.

<sup>79</sup> Cyril Alex.; Loisy; W. Bauer; Lagrange; Bultmann; (Dodds); (Brown).

<sup>80</sup> Bernard; Schlatter; Barrett. Brown proposes (225) that Jn is thinking of Sinai and that the Father may have witnessed by giving the Law (227), but then considers Bernard's theory "even more probable".

<sup>81</sup> The perf. of *μαρτυρεῖν* occurs at Jn 1,34; 3,26; 5,33—always with the Baptist as subject; at 19,35 the evangelist is subject. The aor. ind. is found only 3×, always to underline a specific statement which does not have the person of Christ as such in view (Jn 1,32; 4,44; 13,21). The "aspect" not the "time" factor is what is of importance here. The same may be said of the one instance of the aor. imp. (Jn 18,23). The subj. aor. (Jn 1,7.8; 2,25; 18,37), closely related in value to the fut. (*Blass-Deb.*, 318; 363), is used with the Baptist (1,7.8) and Jesus (18,37) as subject. In both instances it is used with the past tense of *ἐρχεσθαι* (*ἔλθεν, ἐλήλυθα*). John and Jesus came to bear witness. The testimony is regarded as future with respect to their act of "coming"—in the case of Jesus there can be no doubt that his witness is present; John's may be "past", but it retains its value in the present. There is only one instance of the fut.: the testimony of the Spirit! (15,26). Otherwise the witness to the person of Jesus is always given in the pres. (by the Baptist: 1,15; by Jesus: 3,32; 5,31; 8,13.14.18; by the Father: 5,32(bis); 8,18; by the *ἔργα*: 5,36; 10,25; by the Scriptures: 5,39; by the disciples: 15,27; by the evangelist: 21,24. As for *μαρτυρία*, it is found used with

case, to speak of the divine *μαρτυρία* as a thing of the past? Jn seems to be thinking of a *specific* testimony given by the Father in the past (although enduring until the present in its effect).

One might object that the perfect *μεμαρτύρηκεν* is also used at 1 Jn 5,9f and that the reference here is hardly to OT revelation! This argument is far from decisive. The witness borne by the Father in 1 Jn 5,9 is not specified.<sup>82</sup> The witness of God is *that* he bore witness. The author may, presumably, be referring back to Jn 5,37<sup>83</sup> (in which case we are in a vicious circle!) or to the testimony the Father has borne to Jesus in his earthly ministry, viewed as a consummated whole. This is possible in the Epistle, where the Spirit is τὸ μαρτυροῦν (5,6—contrast the future of Jn 15,26) and the Spirit, the water and the blood are the three μαρτυροῦντες. We are in the time of the Church and the *present* testimony is entrusted to these and to the writer (1 Jn 1,2; 4,14). The witness of God, on the other hand, is that he *has* witnessed (in Christ). This is hardly the perspective of the Gospel and certainly does not suit the historical situation of Jn 5,31-40. Even if we admit, as we will, that this text reflects the situation of the Church, it is hardly likely that the evangelist would have spoken of the witness of the Father borne in Jesus to the person of his Son as a thing of the past. The divine testimony in the Gospel is always considered, as we have said, to be a present (or future: Jn 15,26) reality.<sup>84</sup> On the contrary, if the testimony of the Father is that given in OT revelation, the reason why Jn would use the perfect *μεμαρτύρηκεν* is perfectly obvious. OT revelation is viewed by the evangelist (Jesus) as closed by and fulfilled in the person of Jesus; hence its "past" nature and its "abiding" value.

We have spoken of the "revelation of God in the OT". Whether Jn is thinking specifically of the Scriptures or not will, for the moment, have to be left undecided.

V. 37b. Is 37b to be treated as a parenthesis or is it to be put on the same footing as 38a? Opinions are divided on this point.<sup>85</sup> In our

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*εἶναι*, always in the pres.: 1,19; 5,31.32; 8,13.14.17; 19,35; 21,24. When used with the verb λαμβάνειν one always has the impression that the *μαρτυρία* is a present reality, there to be accepted or rejected.

<sup>82</sup> So R. Schnackenburg (*Die Johannesbriefe* (Freiburg i. Br., 1953), ad loc.) who refuses to commit himself.

<sup>83</sup> Schnackenburg, *ibid.* This is hardly likely, in our estimation.

<sup>84</sup> See n. 81.

<sup>85</sup> Zahn, Bernard, Dodd, W. Bauer, Brown (with hesitation), B. Weiss treat it as

estimation, whether the testimony of the Father be taken as a reference to the OT or to revelation in Christ, 37b cannot be considered a parenthesis. One would have to translate: "The Father who sent me has himself borne witness to me (granted: you have never heard his voice nor seen his form) and yet you do not have his word abiding in you".

If the words of 37b are a parenthesis, they are not a reproach but the statement of a fact and/or recognized principle. The fact would be: "You, my listeners, have never heard God's voice nor seen his form"; the principle: "God has no form which can be seen or voice which can be heard". Fact and principle need not both be affirmed. To say that his listeners have never heard God's voice, etc., need not imply that God has no voice which can be heard, etc. *De facto*, some authors have Jn affirm both fact and principle:<sup>86</sup> "The Father has testified—true he has no voice which can be heard, etc., and you (my listeners) have therefore not heard his voice, etc." Such a sweeping principle can hardly be behind v. 37b. It completely disregards many OT passages which affirm not only that God has a "voice", but that it can be "heard" and was heard by a privileged and representative few. These texts usually go hand in hand (although this is less frequent) with the affirmation that God's "form" was "seen" (or that God himself was seen). True, the contrary opinion is also found and one could think that Jn, who elsewhere affirms (1,18; 6,46) that no one has seen God, is reflecting this last view. Yet Jn never speaks of the impossibility of hearing God (i.e., "No man has heard God") and, although he insists that God is seen only in the Son, he does not say that God is heard in the Son, much less that he is heard *only* in the Son.<sup>87</sup> Furthermore the expressions: *φωνὴν τοῦ θεοῦ ἀκούειν*, *εἶδος τοῦ θεοῦ ὁρᾶν* are not the same as: *τὸν θεὸν ἀκούειν* or *τὸν θεὸν ὁρᾶν*. The parenthesis of v. 37b would

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a parenthesis. Loisy and Lagrange are opposed to such a view. Westcott, Hoskyns and Lightfoot take for granted, as do most translations (*RSV*, *Bib de Jér*, *AV*), that it is not a parenthesis.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. W. Bauer, Bernard; Dodd (*Interpretation*, 267) can go so far as to say: "God has, unlike men, no *φωνή*, or at any rate none which can be heard by men".

<sup>87</sup> Jn does hold that the "word" of God is heard in the word of Jesus and that Jesus himself heard (this word from ?) God. Although he does not speak of "hearing God" (*ἀκούειν τοῦ πατρὸς*), he speaks of *ἀκούειν παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς* (6,45), admits that God spoke to Moses (9,29), that the word of God was addressed to Israel (?) (10,35) and that the Father spoke to the Baptist (1,33).

therefore have to be reduced to the simple statement of a fact: "The Father has borne witness (even though *you* have never heard his voice nor seen his form) and yet you do not have his word abiding in you".

No serious syntactical objection can be raised against this interpretation (although Lagrange points out that the *καί* cannot carry the weight of such a complete opposition as: "The Father has borne witness ... *and yet* you do not have his word ..."). The difficulty is rather "logical". The three affirmations seem to be on the same level and the *οὐτε φωνήν ... οὐτε εἶδος ...* seem to constitute the very nucleus of the reproach advanced against the Jews. To reduce v. 37b to an "aside" would be to deprive the reprimand of most of its force.

The objection just raised does not pretend to be conclusive. The strongest argument against taking v. 37b as a parenthesis comes from the excellent sense v. 37 gives if v. 37b is *not* so treated.

The formulation of Jn 5,37b is rather singular. *Εἶδος* appears only here in Jn, *εἶδος αὐτοῦ* (= τοῦ πατρός, τοῦ θεοῦ) only here in the NT. As for the *φωνή*, it is the only instance in which Jn speaks of the *φωνή* of God.<sup>88</sup> That there may be an allusion to the revelation of God on Mount Sinai (Horeb) was already admitted as a possibility by Chrysostom and Cyril of Alexandria.<sup>89</sup> A very strong case may be made for this.

*Hearing God's voice and seeing God's form). The OT background*

One might say, in general, that vision and audition are the two "constants" of "revelation". The OT places very heavy emphasis upon the "word" (vs. Hellenistic and mystery religions), but the visible aspect of revelation is not

<sup>88</sup> Jn 12,28 is the only possible exception. It is doubtful whether the "voice from heaven" may be identified with the "voice of the Father"; we are probably dealing with the *בַּת קוֹל*. Furthermore, is it legitimate to speak of *believers* hearing God's voice in this case, as Barrett (ad loc.) does?

<sup>89</sup> The thought is not formulated very clearly by Chrysostom (*Hom. in Jo.* XL, P.G. 59, 233), but is very clearly expressed by Cyril Alex. (*Comm. in Jo.*, Lib. III, P.G. 73, 413). The interpretation has been taken up by Loisy (ad loc.). It has been suggested as a "possibility" by Brown (ad loc.) who, however, prefers another interpretation. To our knowledge the only modern exegete who takes vv. 37f as a clear reference to Sinai is Dahl (*art. cit.*, 133). J. Giblet ("Le témoignage du Père (Jean 5,31-47)" *BiViChr* 12 (1955-56) 49-59) holds that, at v. 37a, Jn is thinking of the revelation of the OT (*ibid.*, 55; comp. 51). It is not clear whether by OT he means the Sinaitic revelation or the OT as "Scripture". Of v. 37b, however, he correctly remarks: "nous préférons voir ici une évocation de la théophanie du Sinai" (55).

excluded—at times it is even stressed. That God can manifest himself in some visible “form” (or “aspect”) and by making his voice heard is affirmed explicitly in the OT. Often the two modes of manifestation are found side by side. Nor are we dealing with simple metaphors: a number of texts state that God or his “form” are seen and his “voice” heard in the proper sense. We are thinking of those texts which one has reason to believe imply that God was truly seen in some “form” or other and/or that his “voice” was truly heard, as opposed to other texts where the “visionary” element rather excludes such a possibility (i.e., dreams and, possibly, prophetic visions).<sup>90</sup>

But does the OT wish to say that, when God came down or appeared in the form of fire, etc., he was actually “seen”? Eichrodt has given an admirable answer to this question. Popular thought does not make such subtle theological distinctions and Israel was no exception. There was a tradition in Israel which affirmed that God himself was seen in such “forms”, even though it also held that the divine glory could not be fully perceived by man.<sup>91</sup>

Among the “real” theophanies (i.e., those which speak of God having been truly seen and/or his voice truly heard) we wish to give our attention first and foremost to those connected with the figure of Moses and the events of Sinai. This seems justified on the following grounds:

- 1) The Sinai events are the corner-stone of God's self-revelation to Israel.
- 2) God making his voice heard and his form seen (appearing in some form) are constant elements of the Sinai tradition.
- 3) The Israelite idea of theophany is probably rooted in the Sinai and Exodus traditions.
- 4) The figure of Moses cannot be separated from the revelation of God at Sinai and the revelation of God to Israel in general. In the Hexateuch Moses, to whom God appears and speaks, is the representative of Israel.<sup>92</sup>

Certain OT figures enjoy such an intimate friendship with God that he appears to them in some visible form and speaks with them.<sup>93</sup> This intimacy with God

<sup>90</sup> Both Michaelis (*TWNT* V, 329-331) and J. Hempel (*RGG* VI, art. “Theophanie”, 841-843) distinguish between these two forms of vision. This is in keeping with Num 12,6-8, where the revelation of God to Moses is distinguished from that given to prophets in “visions” and “dreams”. There is, however, a way in which even prophetic visions may be considered “reale Theophanie” (vs. Hempel); cf. von Rad, *Theol.*, II, 67-78; esp. 76.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 3.

<sup>92</sup> Von Rad, *Theol.*, I, 302-309; esp. 302.

<sup>93</sup> The apparition to Jacob is particularly interesting. Gen 32,30(31), the conclusion of the encounter, reads: “Jacob named the place פני אל, for I have seen God (ראיתי) face to face (פנים אל-פנים) and yet my life is spared”. The LXX renders: פני אל by *Εἶδος θεοῦ · εἶδον γὰρ θεὸν πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον κ.τ.λ.* There is no mention of the *φανή* of God, but Jacob speaks with the “man” (God) as one man to another. In 1 K 19 Elijah is the spectator of a theophany which reminds one of the theophany granted to Moses and the people of Israel. The “voice” or “breeze” is the central element. Elijah covers his face in order not to see God. There is a possibility

is granted to Moses in an eminent degree. Whereas God makes himself known to a prophet in a vision and speaks with him in a dream,<sup>94</sup> he *speaks* with Moses "mouth to mouth" (פה אל-פה), clearly (= in personal appearance)<sup>95</sup> and not in enigmas (dark speech) (ותמונת יהוה יבית) (Num 12,6-8).<sup>96</sup> Dt 34,10 can sum up the figure of Moses with the words: "Since then, there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the Lord knew *face to face*."<sup>97</sup> This tradition of Moses' familiarity with God seems inseparable from his activity as legislator, which is indissolubly united with the events of Sinai. It is there, primarily, that the Lord *spoke* to Moses (Ex 19,9), that Moses *spoke* and God *answered* him *in a voice*;<sup>98</sup> it is there that, as the texts imply, Moses met the Lord *face to face* (Ex 19,20). According to Ex 33,7-11, it is also in the Tent<sup>99</sup> that "God *spoke face to face* with Moses, as a man does with a friend" (33,11).<sup>100</sup> Num also states that, in the Tent, Moses *heard* the *voice* of God (Num 7,89).<sup>101</sup> The text of Ex 33,13 is uncertain, but in Ex 33,18-23 Moses is granted the *vision* of *God's back*—the vision of God's face being denied to mortal man.<sup>102</sup>

that the author had Ex 19 in mind, but this is not certain. At any rate, the theophany is certainly connected with the "holy mountain" (Horeb) and, indirectly, with the Sinai events. Cf. von Rad, *Theol.*, II, 29.

<sup>94</sup> See above, n. 90.

<sup>95</sup> במראה; *Str.-Bill.* (III, 454) rightly translates: "in (persönlicher) Erscheinung". Targ Onk has בחייו; Targ Jer I has חזו "als sichtbare Erscheinung". On the speculations of the Rabbis opposing the vision of Moses and that of the prophets cf. G. Kittel, *TWNT* I, art. αἰνιγμα, 177f. He insists that what is seen is "die Sache selber" (*ibid.*, 178, 34ff and n. 10).

<sup>96</sup> The LXX reads: στόμα κατὰ στόμα λαλήσω αὐτῷ, εἶδει καὶ οὐ δι' αἰνιγμάτων, καὶ τὴν δόξαν κυρίου εἶδεν. The LXX reading במראה is supported by the Samaritan text, Targ Onk, Syr, Vet Lat, various MSS and S Num 103, ad loc. The translation δόξα = תמונה is an obvious attempt to safeguard the divine majesty (as it is in Targ Onk, Syr and Vet Lat, where we also find "glory"). תמונה means "form", "likeness", "semblance", not "glory". The LXX itself renders תמונה by δόξα only here and at Ps 16(17),15.

<sup>97</sup> אשר ידעו יהוה פנים אל-פנים. We probably have here a concrete conception of the face of God—as we do at Gen 32,31; Judg 6,22. Cf. Eichrodt (*Theol.*, II, 15-19, esp. 16), who speaks of a "konkrete Auffassung der panim". Ex 33,20 will deny even Moses this privilege. On the equivalence פנים—God, see Ex 18,20.

<sup>98</sup> Ex 19,19. LXX: Μωϋσῆς ἐλάλει, ὁ δὲ θεὸς ἀπεκρίνατο αὐτῷ φωνή; MT: בקול. Thunder is frequently called the voice of God, but need not be rendered by thunder here, it could also mean "voice". Cf. *Bib de Jér.*, ad loc.

<sup>99</sup> The Tent was not the earthly dwelling place of God (as the Temple became) but the "meeting place", "der Ort der Begegnung" of God and Moses. Cf. von Rad, *Theol.*, I, 247ff; esp. 249.

<sup>100</sup> LXX: καὶ ἐλάλησεν κύριος πρὸς Μωϋσῆν ἐνώπιος ἐνωπίω, ὡς εἴ τις λαλήσει πρὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ φίλον; MT: דבר יהוה אל-משה פנים אל-פנים. Comp. Dt 5,4—Israel!

<sup>101</sup> LXX: ἤκουσεν τὴν φωνὴν κυρίου λαλοῦντος πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀνωθεν τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου; MT: ישמע את-הקול.

<sup>102</sup> See n. 97.

At Sinai, the Israelites or some of their number shared, according to some texts, in the privilege granted to Moses. Ex 19,9.11 has the Lord say, "I am coming to you (Moses) in a thick cloud that *the people may hear* when I speak to you", and that, "The Lord will come down upon Mount Sinai *in the sight of all the people*".<sup>103</sup> The Lord comes down, according to J in the form of fire (Ex 19,18), according to E in that of a cloud (Ex 19,9); according to P it is "the appearance of the glory of the Lord" which is beheld in the form of fire (Ex 24,17).<sup>104</sup> The clearest, most audacious and primitive text is Ex 24,1-2.9-12, which belongs to J. Moses ascends the mountain in the company of Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel (v. 1) "and they *saw* the God of Israel ... they *beheld* God" (vv. 10.11).<sup>105</sup> The occasion is a sacred meal they share with the Lord! When Dt recalls the events of Horeb (Dt 4,9-20), the Israelites are reminded that God spoke to them, that they *heard his voice*, although they did not *see his form* (Dt 4,12).<sup>106</sup> This is obviously a reaction against an earlier tradition which affirmed that they heard his voice *and saw* his form.

What distinguishes Israel from all the other peoples is that they *heard the voice of God* speaking from the midst of the *fire* (the reference is to Sinai) and remained alive (Dt 4,33). God let them *hear his voice* from heaven and on earth he let them *see his great fire* and *hear his voice* out of the midst of the *fire* (Dt 4,36). Moses recalls again that God *spoke to them* out of the midst of the *fire*, in a cloud, *with a strong voice* (Dt 5,22). And when they *heard the voice* (Dt 5,23), they said, "Behold the Lord God has *shown us his glory* and we have *heard his voice* out of the midst of the *fire*" (Dt 5,24); "if we *hear the voice of the Lord* ... any more we shall die. For who ... has *heard the voice of the living God* speaking out of the midst of *fire*, as we have, and has still lived?" (Dt 5,25f). They then beg Moses to take on the

<sup>103</sup> Ex 19,9ff—LXX: 'Ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ παραγίνομαι πρὸς σέ ἐν στύλῳ νεφέλης, ἵνα ἀκούσῃς ὁ λαὸς λαλοῦντός μου πρὸς σέ ... καταβήσεται κύριος ἐπὶ τὸ ὄρος τὸ Σιναι ἐναντίον παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ—MT: יֵרֵד יְהוָה לְעֵינֵי כָל-הָעָם עַל-הָרֹם סִינִי.

<sup>104</sup> On the "cloud" and "fire" as visible manifestations of God, see Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 3. P prefers to speak of the *יהוה כבוד*. This term at times is used in a way which distinguishes between God and his "glory" (*כבוד*), but sometimes—as in the present case—the *יהוה כבוד* appears as "etwas Jahwe unmittelbar Zugehöriges, ein Teil seines übernatürlichen Wesens" (von Rad, *Theol.*, I, 253) which can hardly be distinguished from his person (cf. Ex 33,18.20). See further Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 12f.

<sup>105</sup> MT: וִירָאוּ אֶת אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל ... וְאֵל אֲצִילִי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא שָׁלַח יְדוֹ וַיַּחֲזוּ אֶת הָאֱלֹהִים. The LXX weakens the "realism" of the text and translates: καὶ εἶδον τὸν τόπον, οὗ εἰστήκει ἐκεῖ ὁ θεὸς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ... καὶ τῶν ἐπιλέκτων τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ οὐ διεφώνησεν οὐδὲ εἶς· καὶ ὥφθησαν ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τοῦ θεοῦ.

<sup>106</sup> MT: וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֲלֵיכֶם מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵשׁ קוֹל דְּבָרִים אַתֶּם שְׁמַעְתֶּם וְתוֹמוֹתַי אֵינֶכֶם וַיֹּלֶחַת קוֹל הָאֵשׁ וְהָיָה קוֹל רָגְמָתְכֶם וְהָיָה קוֹל הָאֵשׁ וְהָיָה קוֹל הָאֵשׁ. LXX: καὶ ἐλάλησεν κύριος ὑμῶς ἐν μέσσοις τοῦ πυρός· φωνῇν ῥημάτων ὑμεῖς ἠκούσατε καὶ ὁμοίωμα οὐκ εἶδετε, ἀλλ' ἡ φωνήν. This text may be explained as an attempt to safeguard the spirituality of God. It contradicts Num 12,6-8 (see above, n. 96). Vv. 15-20; 23f are secondary, cf. M. Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien*, I (Halle (Saale), 1943), 38f, for an analysis of the text. On the "seeing" of the voice, cf. Kittel, *TWNT* II, art. εἶδος, 371.

office of intermediary. Dt 18,16 has Israel say : "Let me not *hear again the voice of the Lord my God* or *see this great fire* any more, lest I die".

It is significant that when, in Sirach, we again come across the association : seeing God in some form and hearing his voice, it is again in conjunction with the Sinai revelation and Moses.

Sir 17,13 : *μεγαλεῖον δόξης εἶδον οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτῶν καὶ δόξαν φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἤκουσεν τὸ οὖς αὐτῶν.*

Sir 45,5 : *ἠκούτισεν αὐτὸν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰσέγαγεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν γρόφον καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ κατὰ πρόσωπον ἐντολάς, νόμον ζωῆς.*

In the book of Nehemiah, when reference is made to the Sinai events, God is said to have "come down (from heaven) on Mount Sinai" and to have "spoken with them from heaven" (Neh 9,13).

It would be an error to try to interpret these texts in a purely "metaphorical" sense. Although the various traditions are not in perfect accord with one another, we can safely say that the vision of God (in some "form" or directly) and the hearing of his "voice" (*φωνή—קוֹל*) seem to be a constant, recurring element of the traditions relative to Moses and the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai.

The texts just quoted are already sufficient to show that this is the possible background of Jn 5,37b. God revealed himself to the Jews as a nation—he made his voice heard and his form seen to Moses and, through Moses and the events of Mount Sinai, to Israel as a whole. So Judaism thinks.<sup>107</sup> In reality, says Jn, you have never

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<sup>107</sup> God's voice is heard and he himself is seen very frequently in the Apocalypses. This literature attests to the belief that audition *and* vision are the two essential aspects of revelation. It is further clear that, at least in these circles, the sight of God and the hearing of his voice were considered privileges granted to a few elect (Abraham, Henoch, etc.) to whom special revelations were made. On hearing the voice of God, cf. Ap Abr 8,2; 9,1; 10,1-2; 18,13; 19,1; 2 Bar (Bar syr) 13,1; 22,1. God speaks to Baruch (2 Bar 4,1; 5,2; 15,1; 17,1, etc.), to Abraham (Ap Abr 22ff) and on Sinai (Jub 50,1). On God appearing in some form, cf. 1 Hen (eth Hen) 1,2(bis); 14,15ff; Jub 15,3 (to Abraham); 32,17f (to Jacob). The Rabbinical texts carry more weight. Together with the texts of Sir, quoted above, they show that the tradition according to which God's form) was seen and his voice heard by Moses and Israel was kept alive right up until the NT period and even afterwards. The most interesting and most valuable text is Mek Ex 19,11 (72<sup>a</sup>), which is a commentary on the words : "God will come down upon Sinai in the sight of all the people" and reads : "It teaches that at that moment they saw what Ezekiel and Isaiah did not see". The same thought is exposed at length in some words attributed to Rabbi Eli'ezer (90 c.) by Mek Ex 15,2. Commenting on the words of the maiden : "This is my God, him will I extol" the Israelites are said to have seen God face to face and the humblest maid to have seen what Ezekiel and the prophets did not see; cf. also Ex R 23 (85<sup>c</sup>); Dt R 7 (204<sup>c</sup>). S Num 12,8 tries to diminish the force of the text. Moses saw the word (*דיבור*), not the Shekinah (God himself). The reason given : Ex 33,20 ! The idea of "seeing the word" is probably derived from Dt 4,12. There was much speculation on Num 12,8 on the part of the Rabbis.



heard his voice and have never seen his form. No foundation is yet given to this statement.

V. 38a. One would be tempted to interpret: "not having been the beneficiaries of divine revelation (not having heard God's voice nor seen his form),<sup>108</sup> you *cannot* have the 'word of God' abiding in you". Yet, *καὶ οὐ*, after a negative sentence, does not indicate correlation or relation but independent continuation.<sup>109</sup> We are probably dealing with another claim made by Judaism—they possess the "word of God".

The meaning one gives to *λόγος* here will vary according to the interpretation given to *μεμαρτύρηκεν*. The authors who take v. 37a as a reference to the testimony given by the Father in the OT (Scriptures) tend to understand *λόγος* as the "word of God contained in the Scriptures";<sup>110</sup> those who speak of *μεμαρτύρηκεν* as the testimony the Father bears in Christ to him who believes, understand *λόγος*, sometimes with hesitation, as the word spoken by God in Christ.<sup>111</sup>

In keeping with the fact that Jn is not thinking in v. 37 of the Scriptures as such, but rather of Moses and the Sinai revelation in general, we believe that *λόγος* does not designate the (written) word of the Scriptures (the written Torah), but rather the Torah described in general terms: as the revelation of God given to Moses and Israel (at Sinai). We will return to this point shortly.

V. 38b. The ground for the assertions made in vv. 36-38a is now given. The *ὅτι*-clause may be understood in two ways: "you have not ... *because* you do not believe ..."; or: "that you have not ... *is shown by the fact that* you do not believe ..."<sup>112</sup> If the interpretation

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Moses is said to have seen God through one glass, others through nine glasses; or: Moses saw God through a clear glass, the others through an opaque glass. Lev R 1 refers to Num 12,8 and quotes the words "He saw God's form". For these texts, cf. *Str.-Bill.*, I, 598; II, 317; III, 453f.

<sup>108</sup> Voice and aspect are the means whereby a person reveals himself; seeing and hearing the means by which this revelation is apprehended. This "psychological" or "empirical" aspect of the question was perhaps present in Jn's mind, but he was not thinking in such terms.

<sup>109</sup> Cf. *Blass-Deb.*, § 445,4.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. Bultmann, 200; Dodd, *Interpretation*, 266f; W. Bauer, ad loc.; Loisy, 414; Lagrange, ad Jn 5,37.

<sup>111</sup> Bernard, Barrett, Brown. The "word" that abides in the believer is the "word" Jesus has spoken, the "word" of the Father. That the "word" abides in the believer, means that the believer abides in Jesus and Jesus (the Word) in the believer.

<sup>112</sup> "Sign": Thomas, Westcott, Lagrange, Bultmann (200); "cause": Bernard; both "sign" and "cause": Barrett.

we propose is correct, both senses are possible, but the  $\sigma\tau\iota$  is more forceful if taken to indicate the sign rather than the cause. That the Jews have not heard, etc., do not have, etc., is obvious from the fact that they do not believe in the one whom the Father sent.<sup>113</sup>

At 5,37-38 Jn is relating the revelation of God given under the old dispensation to that given in his Son. God made his voice heard and his form seen in the OT revelation; he makes his word heard and himself seen in the Son in the last days. The Jews do not believe in the Son—they consequently never really heard God's voice or saw God's form at all. If they had they would "see" the Father in him and "hear" the word of the Father in the word of Jesus.

d) *The testimony of the Scriptures—vv. 39.(40)*

Up to this point, Jn was thinking of the revelation made to Israel in general, of Moses and Sinai as the fountainhead of this revelation in particular, but he was not thinking specifically in terms of the written word of God, the Scriptures. In v. 38 he mentioned the  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  of God. In the OT the  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  of God, his  $\text{דבר}$ , becomes, with Dt, the written word, the Scriptures. The "words" of God spoken to Moses and to Israel—at Sinai—(and afterwards to the prophets)<sup>114</sup> are present to and possessed by the Jews in the Scriptures, the Torah.<sup>115</sup> The word  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  thus induces the evangelist to make an explicit reference to the Scriptures.<sup>116</sup>

<sup>113</sup> On the other hand, Jn is also affirming that only those who believe in Christ have the key to the Scriptures. They are an "open book" only to those who have "seen" their fulfilment in Jesus.

<sup>114</sup> The connection between the revelation to Moses (and Israel) at Sinai and the Scriptures as a whole is not so loose as it may seem. Although, strictly speaking, Moses was considered to have written only the Pentateuch (Torah in the strict sense), his authorship was extended to embrace all the "writings". He was considered to have uttered the words of all the prophets (Ex R 42,8). The Prophets and the Hagiographa were but explanations of the Pentateuch and are but an authority of second order (Moore, *Judaism*, I, 239f).

<sup>115</sup> The Torah, for orthodox Judaism, was both written and oral. The "unwritten Law" (tradition) is not an entity which is separate from the "Scriptures". It is there to interpret, apply and supplement the written Law (Moore, *Judaism*, I, 251ff). Like the Torah as a whole, it was revealed to Moses at Sinai (*ibid.*, 254; III, n. 17); so much so that certain rules of the unwritten Law are specifically called "the Mosaic rule of Law from Sinai" (*ibid.*, 256; 258).

<sup>116</sup>  $\text{Αἱ γραφαί}$ . The collected "books" (writings) or "sayings" of the OT; cf. Mt 21,42; 22,29; Mk 12,24; Lk 24,27.32.45. Jn uses the plural only here.  $\text{Ἡ γραφή}$  is found

We must now analyze more closely the problem as to whether or not the *μεμαρτύρηκεν* of the Father in v. 37 is that of the Scriptures. The difference in the tenses *μεμαρτύρηκεν* (v. 37) ... *αἱ μαρτυροῦσαι εἰσιν* (v. 39) is significant. If the author had already been thinking explicitly of the Scriptures at v. 37a he would have used the present or the present periphrastic construction.<sup>117</sup> The only factor which can account for the perfect is that the evangelist was thinking of the past "act" whereby the Father testified (revelation to Moses and Israel, especially at Sinai) rather than of a consequent and present "effect" of this act: the Scriptures. The testimony of the Scriptures is given in the present—they are there to be read and considered; that of the Father is given in the past—it is present only in its effect. This distinction is confirmed by the structure of vv. 32-40.

The verb *μαρτυρεῖν* corresponds to each and every "witness" adduced (vv. 32.33.36.37.39). The Scriptures constitute a distinct (but not separate) "testimony". Vv. 39-40 give the impression of being an ulterior specification of vv. 37f, to which they correspond. The Jews have never truly received the revelation of God (vv. 37b-38a); the proof: they do not believe in the one God has sent (v. 38b). The Jews have never truly understood the Scriptures (v. 39); the proof: they do not "come" to Jesus (v. 40). The thought progresses. The Jews are not only presumptuous when they consider themselves those to whom God revealed himself, they are blind to the Scriptures themselves, their prized possession. They think: *ἐν αὐταῖς (ταῖς γραφαῖς) ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἔχομεν*. To this Jn answers: it is mere illusion (*δοκεῖτε*). The "searching"<sup>118</sup> of the Scriptures (the Jewish understanding and interpretation of the Torah) has precisely not led them to Christ; they have set their hopes on finding life in the

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frequently in Jn to designate a particular passage of the OT, as in Lk 4,21 (comp. Mt 2,17; 27,9). Cf. the interesting Excursus of Bernard on "The authority of the OT" (CXLVIIff; esp. CLIf and CLIVf) and ad Jn 2,22. See also above, p. 188, n. 34.

<sup>117</sup> See what has been said above, pp. 216f and n. 81.

<sup>118</sup> *Ἐρυνῶτε* was taken as an impt. by all the ancients (Tertullian, Origen, Methodius, Theodore Mops., Chrys., Irenaeus) with the exception of Cyril of Alex. Their opinion is supported by Pap Eg 2, the Old Syr and the Vulg. The indicative sense is almost universally accepted by the moderns (W. Bauer, Westcott, Loisy, Lagrange, Bernard, Barrett, Brown, Bultmann, Dodd, Schlatter, Hoskyns). Westcott (ad loc.) gives four reasons which make the indicative more acceptable from a logical point of view. On the literary-critical aspect of the problem, cf. Dodd, *Interpretation*, 329, n. 1 and esp. M.-E. Boismard, "A propos de Jean 5,39. Essai de critique textuelle", *RB* 55 (1948) 5-34.

Scriptures and have refused to come to Jesus. It is with this in mind that Jn can say that life is not to be found ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς but only ἐν τῷ υἱῷ τοῦ θεοῦ. The perspective is not quite that of Paul. The opposition is not Law—faith<sup>119</sup> (or : works—grace) but rather Law—Christ in the sense that the Law is a testimony to Christ and has value only as such. Christ is the realization of what was promised in the Law (Scriptures). It is the christological aspect which is the centre of interest for Jn. We cannot truly speak of an opposition Law—Jesus if not in the sense that the Jewish understanding of the Torah creates an opposition where there is none (in this sense Jesus and the Law *are* opposed). For Jn (and Christians) the Law is not opposed to Jesus; it has permanent value as a μαρτυρία to Jesus and finds its fulfilment in him. If the γραφαί can be said to be life-giving (but Jn would avoid this formulation), it is only *insofar as they lead to Jesus*, as a “witness” to him.<sup>120</sup>

We would now like to consider the other opinion mentioned at the outset of this section. Jn would be saying that “the witness of the Father is granted to those who believe in the Son. Those who do not believe in Jesus do not hear the voice of God (cf. 12,29), nor have they seen him (1,18) ... the observer ... must believe in Jesus first and then he will receive the direct testimony from God” (Barrett). This interpretation is certainly not contrary to Johannine thought. It reflects statements made elsewhere in the Gospel, especially at 8,14ff, but it raises serious difficulties. Some have already become clear during the course of our exposition.

It is not only a question of “tense” but also one of context. The thought of the Father testifying to Jesus in the person of Jesus himself is out of place in Jn 5,31-40. Jesus is adducing witnesses which should be “obvious” even to the Jews who stop at “appear-

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<sup>119</sup> Loisy (415) affirms : “le salut n’est pas dans la Loi mais dans la foi”. This thought is certainly present, but the formulation is more Pauline than Johannine and it is not what John wishes to emphasize. For him the capital point is that Christ, not the Torah, gives life.

<sup>120</sup> Is Jn challenging the view of Judaism according to which the Torah is life-giving? Odeberg (224, n. 1) maintains he is not. The Scriptures *do* give life insofar as they testify to Jesus, the bringer of life (in the same sense : W. Bauer, Schlatter). We believe that Jn would hardly deny this, but that it is not the point he is trying to make (cf. Loisy, 415; Bernard; Barrett; Hoskyns). The point is rather that Jesus gives life, not the Torah. Were Jn to affirm that the Law—even if it is only as “witness”, as leading to Christ—is life-giving, it would be an anti-climax.

ances". To want to introduce, in the midst of these, a "witness" which is on a totally different level seems unwarranted, especially since Jn will do this later on in a very different context. At Jn 5,31ff the guiding principle is: Jesus does not bear witness to himself, another does; at Jn 8,13ff the principle will be: Jesus bears witness to himself and his witness is nevertheless valid because the Father bears witness to Jesus in the very testimony Jesus bears to himself.

By interpreting the *ὁ πατήρ μεμαρτύρηκεν* as a reference to OT revelation there is no sudden break in the order of witnesses and there is no repetition—all four witnesses are traced back to the one witness (God) mentioned in v. 32. That Jn should speak of the revelation of God to Israel as the *specific testimony of the Father* (*ὁ ... πατήρ ἐκείνος μεμαρτύρηκεν*), notwithstanding v. 32, is a difficulty which may be reduced to a literary imperfection. It is understandable that the revelation given to Moses and Israel should be considered to be a *μαρτυρία* of the Father in a special sense.<sup>121</sup> God is the immediate subject of this revelation. In the case of the *μαρτυρία* of the Baptist, the *ἔργα* and the Scriptures, he is the mediate subject; his "testimony" is present in the testimony of the Baptist, the *ἔργα*, the Scriptures, but on Mount Sinai (in OT revelation) the Father bore witness directly by making his voice heard and his form seen.

To take the witness of the Father as that of the whole previous dispensation (which may be reduced, for the Jews, to the Sinai revelation and which finds its written expression in the Scriptures) respects the progression of ideas in vv. 31-40, the context and the historical situation (the controversy between Jesus and the Jews and that between the Church and the Synagogue) much better than to take it as a direct testimony given by the Father to believers.

Once this has been said, it must be conceded that the claims Christians made for themselves against the Jews have coloured these

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<sup>121</sup> It is the testimony the Father bore "directly" (i.e., not through the Baptist, the *ἔργα*, not even in the person of Jesus himself) to Jesus. The remark of Loisy is perfectly to the point: "Bien que l'évangéliste ait entendu présenter les œuvres de Jésus comme le témoignage autorisé du Père, la pensée de ce témoignage s'associe à une autre manifestation qui prend assez de relief pour être expressément indiquée, et de préférence, comme le témoignage formel du Père ..." (I underline). These words, which Loisy applies to the Scriptures, are even more true of the self-revelation of the Father (testimony to Christ) to Moses and Israel at Sinai.

verses. They obviously imply that the Jews who are true Israelites, who became Christians, *have* heard God's voice, *have* seen his form, *do* have his word abiding in them and *do* understand the Scriptures—they are the true heirs of OT revelation. This view is explicitly found elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel. The OT formulation, however, is avoided. Christians (believers) see God in Jesus and hear God's word in that of Jesus, they do not see the "*form*" of God nor do they hear the "*voice*" of God. As for the "*word*" they have abiding in them, it is the word of Jesus (which is *also* that of the Father) or Jesus himself.<sup>122</sup> It is especially the expression: "You do not have his word abiding in you" which reflects the claims of Jewish-Christians. Jn is speaking of the "*word*" of God revealed to Moses, but uses an expression which indicates that he is thinking of the "*word*" of Jesus in which the "*word*" of God is to be found in a more profound and definitive sense and which "*remains*" in those who believe.<sup>123</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The *μεμαρτύρηκεν* of the Father (v. 37a) is not directly that of the Scriptures, but his self-revelation to Moses and to Israel (at Sinai in particular), as is made clear by v. 37b. This is not a parenthesis. The two assertions are to be placed on the same footing as v. 38a. Jn is repeating the claim made by the Jews and denying it. The question is not at all the validity of the tradition according to which Israel (Moses) in previous ages, at Sinai, saw God's "*form*" and heard his "*voice*" (Jn does not consider this aspect but would probably admit this is possible). The evangelist is thinking of the prerogatives claimed by Judaism as represented by the Jews of his day who opposed and persecuted Jesus and his followers as heretics. They claim to be the depositaries of God's past revelation to Moses and Israel, yet they do not believe in Jesus, whom God sent. They consequently are said never to have heard God's "*voice*", never to have seen his "*form*" and not to be in possession of his "*word*". Implicitly these claims are made for those who have believed in Jesus (as the wording in v. 38a indicates). Vv. 39f speak of the "*testimony*" of the Scriptures, which should be distinguished from the "*testimony*" given to Moses and

<sup>122</sup> See Chapter Twelve, pp. 414-430.

<sup>123</sup> See Chapter Twelve, pp. 414f.

Israel on Mount Sinai (v. 37) although they are its "outcome". They testify in the present as a reflection of the Father's past testimony. The Jews cannot find life in them, they must come to Jesus, to whom they testify.

The interpretation we have just proposed can best be understood against the background of the debate between the Church and the Synagogue (viz., between Jewish-Christians and Jews). Jn does not hesitate to project the situation which arose after the death of Christ into the past; or better yet: to see the confrontation Church—Synagogue in the confrontation Jesus—Jews. Jesus, speaking from the viewpoint of the Church, is affirming that the Jews (the representatives of unbelieving Judaism) have never perceived God's revelation at all. To recognize God in Christ means to understand OT revelation; a true understanding of OT revelation leads to recognition of the revelation of God in the person of Jesus.

*B) The reason why the Jews do not believe in Jesus as the one to whom OT revelation testifies. Moses accuses them of having betrayed their religious heritage—Jn 5,41-47*

The section Jn 5,41-47 is of interest to our topic in two respects: 1) vv. 41-44 explain the reason why the Jews do not believe and reflects, in its way of reasoning, the opposition between the Church and the Synagogue; 2) vv. 45-47 speak of the condemnatory attitude of Moses towards the Jews and of the relationship of Moses and his writings (the Torah) to Jesus.

*a) The literary and thematic unity of Jn 5,41-47*

Most exegetes consider Jn 5,41-47 a unit.<sup>124</sup> One may speak of unity, provided one admit that it is rather loose. Thematically it is impossible to bring these verses under one heading.<sup>125</sup> Vv. 41-44 begin and end

<sup>124</sup> Thomas, Bultmann, Lagrange, Bernard, Hoskyns, Westcott, Brown.

<sup>125</sup> The section cannot be classified under the heading "die δόξα" (Bultmann, 202). Δόξα is not a "Stichwort" since it appears only at vv. 41.44. This is but one theme. The verses also speak about love of God, faith, coming in one's own name as opposed to coming in the name of the Father, Moses as "accuser" and the relationship of Moses (and what he wrote) to Jesus. It is therefore simpler to try to find a broader "title" for the section and, indeed, this is what most exegetes have done (Thomas, Bernard, Lagrange, Hoskyns, Brown). But no one of these titles is perfectly satisfactory. Were

with the *δόξα* theme. It is this theme, as we shall see, which knits vv. 41-44 closely together. Vv. 45-47 deal with the figure of Moses and with the accusation he brings against the unbelieving Jews.

Why were vv. 41-44 inserted <sup>126</sup> between 37-40 and 45-47, which seem to deal with the same theme: OT revelation, the Scriptures, Moses? The key is to be found in the fact that, although the figure of Moses is inseparable from OT revelation and the testimony of Moses is behind that of the Scriptures, yet he is not brought forth as a witness for Jesus in vv. 37-40. The idea of his testimony is implicit at 5,46 (comp. v. 39), but he is essentially the "accuser". The evangelist wished to use the figure of Moses, already behind OT revelation and the Scriptures, as a climax. The debate Jesus—Jews (Church—Synagogue) comes to its conclusion with Moses accusing his own followers of disloyalty and perversion of the truth. The connection between vv. 41-44 and vv. 45-47 thus also becomes apparent. The words reported in vv. 41-44 are a serious accusation. The Jews would be inclined to believe that this was to be expected. Jesus, after all, is opposed to Moses and the Law—he must needs condemn what he rejects. Such is not the case. The words uttered in vv. 41-44 will receive confirmation from Moses himself, in whom the Jews trust.

Having seen the articulation and thematic unity of our section, we must now examine its relation to vv. 31-40. The relationship cannot be reduced to that which exists between *μαρτυρία* and *δόξα*,<sup>127</sup> although this is an important link between the two sections.

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we to entitle it "An explanation of the unbelief of the Jews" (Bernard; Lagrange), we would be leaving vv. 45-47 out of account. Vv. 41-44 speak of the cause of Jesus' rejection by the Jews, but vv. 45-47 deal rather with the end or outcome of this rejection (Westcott rightly subdivides: vv. 41-44, "cause of rejection"; vv. 45-47, "end of rejection"). "The condemnation of the Jews" is somewhat better, but it applies more to vv. 45-47 than to vv. 41-44, where we are dealing with the grounds of unbelief (the heading is that of Hoskyns (274), but he himself then (275) speaks of the "ground of Jewish unbelief" being exposed in vv. 41-44). The heading "An attack on the disbelief of the Jews" (Brown (274); cf. Thomas, ad loc.: "tarditatem ad credendum redarguit") is more apt, but such an attack is already implicit in the preceding section, especially in vv. 37-40. What one might say is that the attack is more open in vv. 41-47, that grounds are given and a condemnation explicitly pronounced.

<sup>126</sup> Odeberg considers vv. 39,40,45-47 as one block and vv. 41-44 as "put in the midst of that passage" (224f). The reason he finds "immediately clear", but he gives no real explanation. It is interesting to note that Pap Eg 2 omits vv. 40-44 and has vv. 45-47 follow immediately upon v. 39.

<sup>127</sup> Bultmann, 197.



b) *The relationship of vv. 41-47 to vv. 31-40 and chapter 5 as a whole*

Jesus does not testify "to himself", yet he has adduced a number of testimonies in his favour, all to be reduced to that of God. The Jews may think that Jesus is seeking the "glory" (praise) which comes from men by listing all these testimonies.<sup>128</sup> Jesus therefore explains: just as he does not receive the testimony of men (v. 31) so too does he not receive glory (honour) from men (v. 41). Equivalently, we might say: Jesus adduces these testimonies because he seeks the glory of God and loves the Father (14,31), not because he seeks his own glory. But why do the Jews not perceive the nature and value of the "testimonies" adduced and accept them? Two reasons are given: they do not have the love of God in them; they do not seek the glory which comes from God but that which comes from men (vv. 42,44).

The relationship of vv. 45-47 to what precedes has already been touched upon. Being the fountainhead of the whole of the Torah, both written and oral, being the author of the Scriptures (which testify to Jesus) and the representative of Israel receiving the revelation of God at Sinai, it is fitting that Moses should be the very one to accuse the Jews of not having believed in the one about whom he wrote. The Jews are disowned by their very "Rabbi". Thus, vv. 41-47 bring not only vv. 41-44 but the whole chapter to a fitting conclusion. The Jews had accused Jesus of violating the Law by healing on the Sabbath and claiming divine prerogatives (5,16-18). The great discourse Jesus pronounces in his self-defence first moves along strictly theological lines (vv. 19-30) only to turn to the testimony borne to him in the sacred history of Israel (vv. 31-40). He can sum up his peroration by accusing the Jews of neither loving nor seeking the glory of God (vv. 41-44) and by claiming that they, not he (Christians), stand under the condemnation of the Law (vv. 45-47).

c) *The reason why the Jews reject Jesus is not faithfulness to the Law and Moses—Jn 5,41-44*

This unit, as we have said, is enclosed by the term *δόξα* (vv. 41,44). Furthermore, "not having the love of God in oneself" and "not seeking the glory which comes from God" (i.e., "receiving glory

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<sup>128</sup> V. 40 is better referred to what precedes than to what follows (vs. Westcott).

which comes from one another") seem to be intimately related, as is shown by the outcome of both: the Jews do not have the love of God in themselves—they do not receive Jesus; they do not seek the glory which comes from God—they cannot believe. We will therefore begin by analyzing v. 41 and, in particular, the meaning of the word δόξα.

aa) *Jesus does not receive δόξα from men, he receives δόξα from God—Jesus and the Jews—v. 41*

Jesus does not receive δόξα from men (v. 41). The Jews receive δόξα from one another (from men) and (therefore) do not seek the δόξα which comes from the one God. The parallelism is very important. It points to Jesus as the one who seeks the δόξα which comes from the one God.<sup>129</sup>

The thought at 7,18 is somewhat different and yet very close to what we have at 5,41.44. The comparison Jesus is using is clear: an ambassador does not seek his own δόξα; any δόξα he may demand or receive is, if he is a true ambassador, directed towards the one who sent him. The parallelism: τὴν δόξαν τὴν ἰδίαν ζητεῖ—ὁ ζητῶν τὴν δόξαν τοῦ πέμψαντος αὐτόν indicates that the genitive is objective (not: "the δόξα which comes from the one who sent him" but "the δόξα given to the one who sent him").

How should we translate δόξα? In 5,41 the meaning is "honour", "praise", "recognition" for this is the only δόξα men can give. What of the δόξα which comes from God? Is it of the same nature? The same ambiguity faces us at 7,18. On the surface we are dealing with human respect, recognition, honour. Yet the reader knows that Jesus is sent by the Father. Is the δόξα he wishes to ascribe to the Father one of mere human praise or honour?

Our two texts belong to a group in which δόξα takes on a particular shade of meaning.<sup>130</sup> This group is constituted by: Jn 5,41.44; 7,18;

<sup>129</sup> There is a double opposition: 1) the δόξα which comes from God is opposed to δόξα which comes from men (the use of the article is significant—cf. Lagrange, ad loc.); 2) the δόξα which comes from the *only* (one) God is opposed to δόξα which comes from a number of men. God is considered as the one and only source of (the) δόξα. So Lightfoot, Westcott, Bultmann, Barrett. The reading τοῦ μόνου θεοῦ is to be preferred to τοῦ μόνου, cf. Bernard, Barrett (also W. Bauer, Westcott, Bultmann) vs. Lagrange.

<sup>130</sup> Cf. Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 198-201; further: W. Grossouw, "La glorification du Christ dans le quatrième évangile", in: *L'Évangile de Jean* (Paris, 1958), 131-147, 134; 137; G. Kittel, *TWNT* II, art. δόξα, 251, 24ff.

8,50.54; 9,24; 12,43 and is characterized by: 1) δόξα receiving a strong connotation of "honour", "praise", "recognition"; 2) δόξα being used in conjunction with δοξάζειν, with ζητεῖν, or with verbs which are equivalent in meaning to ζητεῖν.<sup>131</sup> The text of this group which offers the closest parallel to 5,41.44 is 12,43. Here the δόξα which comes from men is opposed to that which comes from God. This contrast is very illuminating inasmuch as it posits a certain analogy between the δόξα which comes from God and that which comes from men (i.e., the δόξα which comes from God also entails "recognition", "honour") and, at the same time, opposes the two quite visibly (i.e., the "recognition" or "honour" which comes from God is *not* that which comes *παρὰ ἀνθρώπων*). Is this the only difference between the δόξα which comes from men and that which comes from (is given to) God? In order to answer this question it will be necessary to survey very briefly the meaning δόξα has elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel.<sup>132</sup>

#### Δόξα

The δόξα Jesus possesses, both when he is "with the Father" (as Pre-existent and as Glorified) and when he is on earth is not something he has "of himself". The δόξα which shows forth in Jesus' earthly activity (1,14; 2,11, etc.) is the manifestation of the unity which exists between him and the Father. The δόξα he possesses "with the Father", no longer possessed when on earth but manifested by "signification" in the earthly δόξα,<sup>133</sup> is the radiation of the communion of love which exists between Father and Son.<sup>134</sup> Whether we are dealing with the earthly δόξα of Jesus or with the δόξα he has as pre-existent or exalted Lord,<sup>135</sup> neither exists apart from the Father. His δόξα is, ultimately, that which he has from the Father, as only-begotten Son.

There is another aspect of δόξα in Jn which is of interest to us: the δόξα Jesus gives to his disciples (Jn 17,22)<sup>136</sup> This text is of particular importance because

<sup>131</sup> Δόξαν λαμβάνειν, ἀγαπᾶν are equivalent in meaning to δόξαν ζητεῖν. Jn 9,24 is a case to itself. Although used with διδοῖν, the context indicates that there is a reference to "seeking God's glory" rather than the honour of men. Cf. Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 200.

<sup>132</sup> For an exhaustive treatment of the question cf. *ibid.*, *passim*.

<sup>133</sup> On the relationship between the glory Jesus possesses with the Father and his earthly glory, cf. *ibid.*, 206-209; 226-233.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 214.

<sup>135</sup> Thüsing (*ibid.*, 219-221) rightly distinguishes between the glory Jesus possessed with the Father as the Pre-existent and that which is his as the glorified Lord: "Jesus betet (Jn 17) nicht nur darum, dass alles wieder so sei, wie es vor der Inkarnation gewesen ist ..."

<sup>136</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 181-186.

it could explain the nature of that δόξα which comes from God and which men are asked to "seek" (5,44), to "love" (12,43). The δόξα which Jesus has received from the Father and given to the disciples is neither grace,<sup>137</sup> nor faith,<sup>138</sup> nor the glory of the resurrection,<sup>139</sup> but a share in the very unity he has with the Father,<sup>140</sup> or, better yet, it is the radiance of his communion of love with the Father as revealed to the disciples and as creatively drawing them into this communion of love.<sup>141</sup> This "Liebesgemeinschaft" has become a reality (in Christ) for the disciples and shines forth in them just as it shines forth in Christ. His δόξα has become their δόξα.

#### Δοξάζειν

The whole of Jesus' ἔργον (his words and works and, in an eminent way, his death) is the glorification of the Father.<sup>142</sup> Jesus glorifies the Father through his unconditional dependence upon and obedience to him in his earthly work. By so doing, Jesus also manifests himself as the Son of God, the Revealer and, thereby, glorifies himself by glorifying the Father. This aspect of Jesus' earthly work, however, is not stressed by Jn.<sup>143</sup> The glorification of Jesus coincides with his return to the Father. Jesus is glorified by the resumption of the δόξα he had from the beginning, through the outpouring of the Spirit, in the disciples themselves and in the fruit they bear.<sup>144</sup> It would be wrong to conclude that the Father is not glorified also by the second stage of Jesus' "work" or that Jesus is not glorified by his earthly work. If Jn does not emphasize this latter point, the thought is certainly present. As for the former, it is explicitly affirmed that the Father is also glorified by the work Jesus accomplishes as exalted Lord.<sup>145</sup>

With this background in mind we may now try to understand the use of δόξα as found in Jn 5,41.44 (and 7,18). We have said that the meaning "honour", "recognition" is present. But this cannot be the only meaning of the δόξα Jesus receives from God (5,41.44), or of

<sup>137</sup> Chrysostom, Lagrange.

<sup>138</sup> Bultmann, 395.

<sup>139</sup> Thomas, ad loc.

<sup>140</sup> Schlatter, ad loc.

<sup>141</sup> Thüsing (*Erhöhung*, 185) speaks of the "Glanz und die Kraft seiner Liebes-einheit mit dem Vater" or, more adequately, of "der Glanz der Liebes-einheit Jesu mit dem Vater" which ... "geoffenbart wird und durch diese schöpferische, lebenspendende Offenbarung die Glaubenden in die Liebesgemeinschaft von Vater und Sohn hineinzieht" (182).

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 50-99.

<sup>143</sup> "Das Offenbarerwirken des ersten Stadiums vor der "Stunde", das den Vater verherrlicht, ist zwar faktisch auch Verherrlichung Jesu, aber darauf liegt kein Nachdruck". *Ibid.*, 240; comp. 198f.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, §§ 14; 10; 11.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, § 8.

the δόξα he seeks for the one who sent him (7,18). The δόξα Jesus receives from God on earth is the δόξα which comes from his complete unity with the Father and which *manifests* him as the Revealer, the Son.<sup>146</sup> The δόξα he receives through his return to the Father is the unity ("signified" in all his earthly work) which is now openly *manifested* to the disciples through the Spirit and, in the disciples and their work, to all those who love the Light. The δόξα the Father receives from Jesus' earthly work and from his death is the *manifestation* of Jesus' total dependence upon him and perfect obedience to him. The δόξα the Father receives from the second stage of Jesus' work is given by Jesus' exercising his power over all flesh, the *manifestation*, the effective revelation of the divine prerogatives (κρίσις and ζωοποιήσις) of the Father (shared by Jesus). We have underlined the idea of "manifestation";<sup>147</sup> it is this aspect which affords the link between δόξα in the sense of "glory" and δόξα in the sense of "honour", "recognition" on the part of men.<sup>148</sup>

Curiously enough, Jn does not use the verb δοξάζειν in conjunction with δόξα, even though "to give glory" and "to glorify" are practically synonymous. Jn 8,54 is precious because it is the only case (but cf. 17,5) in which this correspondence is found. It is even more interesting inasmuch as δόξα here also has the sense of "honour", "recognition". That is to say: not only what Jesus *is* (the giver of life and judge) constitutes his δόξα, but also the *recognition* of what he is. The δόξα of Jesus comes from God, not from man (viz., not from himself). It comes from God not only because it is the Father who gives him the δόξα (17,5.22), but because it is the Father who leads men to recognize Jesus for what he is—to give him "honour", but an honour which is quite different from that which the world gives its own. The world "dishonours" Jesus. It is his own disciples

<sup>146</sup> This unity of activity which signifies unity of being is the whole point of the section Jn 5,17-30.

<sup>147</sup> We should beware of introducing theological distinctions where there is no room for them. Thomas (ad 5,41) and Hoskyns (ad 5,41) both hold that Jesus is "glorified" by men not in the sense that his glory is increased thereby. Although Jesus receives his glory from the Father alone, the manifestation of his glory (the "honour", "recognition" he receives from those who believe) is part of the process of the "glorification" of the Son (and the Father).

<sup>148</sup> Thüsing (*Erhöhung*, 200f; 234f) points this out, but does not bring out sufficiently the relationship between the two aspects.

who "honour" him. In faith they recognize him as the Son of God.

This is what Jn 5,41.44 affirms: the δόξα of Jesus comes from God, not from men—the resulting "honour" comes from believers, not from the world. Similarly, in Jn 7,18, the Son seeks the δόξα of (glorifies) the Father inasmuch as the Father is recognized for what he is through the activity of Christ, who leads men to the knowledge of God. The "honour" God receives from men is, once again, not that which comes from the "world", but from those who have come to know Him.

Barrett has justly pointed out <sup>149</sup> that the principle : ὁ μὴ τιμῶν τὸν υἱὸν οὐ τιμᾷ τὸν πατέρα τὸν πέμψαντα αὐτόν "dominates Jn's Christology" and the whole discourse of chapter 5, even though it seems to be mentioned only incidentally at 5,23. The Father has made Jesus the giver of life and the judge in order that he receive the same "honour" which is due to God himself. The accusation of the Jews, according to which Jesus is depriving God of the "honour" due to him by making himself his equal (5,18), is therefore without foundation. On the contrary, it is the Jews who are depriving God of the "honour" he demands by not "honouring" the Son. This text certainly reflects a situation which prevailed not only during Jesus' ministry, but also after his death and which is reflected in numerous texts of the Fourth Gospel.

Jesus affirmed that no prophet is "honoured" (τιμῆν οὐκ ἔχει) in his own country (Jn 4,44) and accused the Jews of "dishonouring" (ἀτιμάζειν) him *because* he "honoured" (τιμᾶν) the Father (Jn 8,49). This is precisely what the Jews contest. For them Jesus is a "sinner". He violates the Sabbath and tries to rob God of his "honour" by making himself (a man) equal to God (5,18; 10,33).<sup>150</sup> Jn contends that the Jews *cannot* "honour" Jesus (give him "recognition" by believing on him) precisely because he seeks the δόξα—"honour" of God and not that which comes from men (because he, as Son of God, "glorifies" God and receives his δόξα—"honour" from God alone).

This thought is found in those texts which speak of the hatred of the world and the Jews for Jesus (the disciples) or, equivalently, of their not loving either Jesus or the Father.<sup>151</sup> To this hatred

<sup>149</sup> Barrett, ad Jn 5,23.

<sup>150</sup> The Synoptics formulate somewhat differently : Jesus is a friend of sinners, a wine-drinker, etc.

<sup>151</sup> Jn 7,7; 15,18.19.23.24.25; 17,14; comp. 5,16; 15,20; 16,1-3.

corresponds their love for darkness, for the *δόξα* which comes from men and for those who are of their own kind, "of the world".<sup>152</sup> It is also the idea which is expressed in the following verses.

bb) *Love of God (and of his δόξα) and faith in Jesus vs. love for the δόξα of men and disbelief in Jesus—the reason for Jewish disbelief—vv. 42-43*

The connection between 5,42-43 and 5,44 is stronger than appears at first sight.<sup>153</sup> There is a double link : that of love and faith and that of love of God and love of God's glory.

Love and faith are closely related in Jn.<sup>154</sup> The love of darkness (Jn 3,16-21), the love of one's own life (Jn 12,25) and the love for the glory of men (Jn 12,43) are loves which are opposed to faith. Love for the light (Jn 3,19) and love for the glory of God (Jn 12,43) are associated with faith.<sup>155</sup> Jn 5,42 is the only text which associates the love of God himself with faith, or so it would seem. The problem is whether the genitive is subjective (the love which comes from God) or objective (the love of God). Opinions are divided among exegetes.<sup>156</sup> Whether the genitive is treated as subjective or objective (or both) is of relative importance, some say.<sup>157</sup> Such a statement is true insofar as love for God in Jn is a response or effect of God's love for man. This is illustrated by Jn 17,26—the only other instance in which *ἀγάπη (τοῦ θεοῦ)* appears in the Fourth Gospel and which presents analogies with Jn 5,42. Love for Jesus (and the brethren) is the outcome of the Father's love being "in the disciples". It is therefore possible to explain 5,42 in this sense. If the love of God (subj. gen.) were in the Jews, they would receive Jesus.

Yet, there are a group of texts which lead in the other direction.

<sup>152</sup> Jn 3,19; 12,43; 7,7.

<sup>153</sup> Cf. Lagrange, ad loc. : "Pas de lien très étroit avec ce qui précède".

<sup>154</sup> Cf. T. Barrosse, "The Relationship of Love to Faith in St. John", *TS* 18 (1957) 538-559.

<sup>155</sup> Barrosse (*art. cit.*, 557) also mentions the love for Christ (Jn 8,42-47). At 8,42ff the love for Christ is used in conjunction with believing but *both* are seen as the *result of having God as Father*. We cannot put this text on the same footing as the others mentioned.

<sup>156</sup> Objective : W. Bauer, Loisy, Lagrange, Lightfoot; subjective : Bernard, Odeberg (226). *Objective* (and subjective) : Barrett, Bultmann; *subjective* (and objective) : Schlatter; both : Westcott, Brown.

<sup>157</sup> Bultmann, 202, n. 5.

At Jn 8,41 the Jews claim God is their Father. Jesus answers: *εἰ δὲ θεὸς πατὴρ ὑμῶν ἦν, ἠγαπᾶτε ἄν ἐμέ... οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ ἐλήλυθα, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνός με ἀπέστειλεν* (v. 42). The analogy with 5,42f is striking: *τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἔχετε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς. ἐγὼ ἐλήλυθα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ πατρὸς μου καὶ οὐ λαμβάνετε με*. At Jn 8,42: 1) the Jews say God is their Father; 2) they should therefore love Jesus; 3) for he came from God, was sent by him. At Jn 5,42: 1) the Jews think they love God; 2) they should therefore receive Jesus; 3) for he came in the Father's name. In both cases Jesus is debating with the Jews. It is natural that Jesus should appeal to what the Jews themselves claim to possess in order to refute them. At 8,42 the Jews claim God is their Father. This is a basic tenet of Judaism, for God is the Father of Israel and the Israelites, singularly and collectively, are "sons".<sup>158</sup> Jesus denies the Jews this prerogative. At 5,42 the assertion is only implicit: the Jews claim they love God. The love for God was commanded by the Law and consisted, for the Jews, in the observance of the Law.<sup>159</sup> They, as the "chosen people" and as guardians of the Law, are those who love God. Jesus denies the Jews this prerogative also. The "proof" that God is not their Father and that they do not love God is one and the same: they do not receive Jesus, they hate him. Elsewhere Jesus will say: "They have hated both me and the Father" and will consider this a fulfilment of a "word" of the Law (15,25).

There is a note of sarcasm in the words which follow: *ἐὰν ἄλλος ἔλθῃ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τῷ ἰδίῳ, ἐκεῖνον λήμψετε*. The Jews do not receive Jesus precisely because he has come in the name of the Father (the God they neither love nor have as Father); if another comes in his own name they will receive him. Such a person<sup>160</sup> will speak

<sup>158</sup> Cf. Moore, *Judaism*, II, 201-211.

<sup>159</sup> That *ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ* in our text should be seen as an allusion to the Law was pointed out by Loisy (415); see also Brown, ad loc. (226).

<sup>160</sup> Needless to say, there has been much speculation about the identity of the ἄλλος. The ancients (cf. W. Bauer, ad loc., for references) thought of the Antichrist. Loisy holds this opinion also. Some (Schmiedel; Bousset) have thought of Bar Kochba. This opinion is untenable today. Odeberg (226) thinks of the devil and Bultmann holds this for "sehr möglich" for the Quelle, and also for the evangelist (the devil as personified in historical personages). Most of the moderns rightly hold that we are dealing with a "general statement" which would embrace all the false Messiahs alluded to in the Synoptics; so W. Bauer, Bernard, Lagrange, Hoskyns, Barrett, Brown. Lagrange rightly points out that ἄλλος is without the article and that the "if another comes"



"of himself", "in his own name", will seek his own glory, the glory of men. The Jews will recognize him as one of their own and will grant him the recognition he seeks from them. It is not impossible that Jn is contrasting those the Jews did receive<sup>161</sup> with the One whom they rejected. Anyone they either received or will receive was or will be of their own kind: a child of the world; the one whom they rejected they rejected because he was "from God", "from above" and "above them all" (Jn 3,31).

cc) *The disciple of Jesus, like his master, must not seek the δόξα which comes from men, but the δόξα which comes from God. The situation of the disciples of Jesus (Jewish-Christians) vis-à-vis the Synagogue as pre-figured in the situation of Jesus with respect to the Jews—v. 44; (12, 42-43; 9,22; 15,27-16,2)*

Jn 5,44 is of vital interest to the theme of the Law in Jn. It is not to be interpreted in the psychological sense of man's instinctive desire for recognition;<sup>162</sup> it is not an invitation to humility;<sup>163</sup> it is not (directly) an attack against the pride of the Pharisees or the "honour" demanded by the Scribes.<sup>164</sup> It is primarily an invitation to the "Kreuzesnachfolge", viewed in the light of the discrimination used by the Jews against those of their number who became followers of Christ and against Christ himself. Not only did the Jews "dishonour" Jesus by considering him a "sinner", and enemy of the Jewish Law and nation, they took measures against those who "honoured" him, who recognized and confessed him as the Messiah.

Jn 5,44 gives no indication as to the precise meaning of δόξαν παρὰ ἀλλήλων (= παρὰ ἀνθρώπων—comp. 5,41) λαμβάνειν καὶ τὴν δόξαν

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(vs. "when another comes"), "laisse la personne dans le vague". Hoskyns adds that the plural παρὰ ἀλλήλων makes it doubtful whether the sing. ἄλλος should be pressed.

<sup>161</sup> Schlatter refers to concrete "false prophets" the evangelist may have had in mind; Bultmann (203, n. 4) holds this for "nicht notwendig", but does not exclude the possibility.

<sup>162</sup> Loisy (416f), Odeberg, Schlatter, Barrett, Lightfoot, Bernard. Bultmann (204) also interprets in this sense, although he admits that for the evangelist the allusion could also be to the pride the Jews take in the observance of the Law and the resulting security they derive from this.

<sup>163</sup> Mt 10,42-45; 23,5-12. Cf. W. Bauer (ad Jn 5,44) and *Str.-Bill.* (II, 553; I, 917f), who both refer to Mt; cf. also Schlatter, ad 5,41.

<sup>164</sup> Lagrange, ad loc.: "Pharisiens et plus nettement les docteurs de la Loi". Cf. also B. Weiss, ad loc.; Brown, ad loc. (226); *Str.-Bill.*, II, 553-556.

τὴν παρὰ τοῦ μόνου θεοῦ οὐ ζητεῖν. Fortunately, there is another text which comes to our assistance: Jn 12,42-43. It offers a very close parallel to Jn 5,44 because it presents the same opposition between ἡ δόξα τῶν ἀνθρώπων and ἡ δόξα τοῦ θεοῦ. The importance of the parallelism can hardly be over-estimated because Jn 12,42f tells us what to "seek" or "love" the δόξα which comes from men, as opposed to that which comes from God, really means. Significantly enough, the δόξα τῶν ἀνθρώπων is connected with the reticence or refusal to confess (ὁμολογεῖν) Jesus through fear of the Pharisees (διὰ τοὺς Φαρισαίους = διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Φαρισαίων) and this fear of the Pharisees is, concretely, the fear of becoming ἀποσυνάγωγος. The key terms at 12,42 are: ὁμολογεῖν, ὁ φόβος τῶν Φαρισαίων (= διὰ τοὺς Φαρισαίους) and ἀποσυνάγωγος γίνεσθαι. The combination of these three elements is to be found in two other Johannine texts: 9,22 and 15,27-16,2. At Jn 9,22 we are told that the parents of the man born blind refuse to make any statement concerning the manner in which their son recovered his sight ὅτι ἐφοβοῦντο τοὺς Ἰουδαίους, who had agreed ἵνα εἰάν τις αὐτὸν (= Ἰησοῦν) ὁμολογήσῃ Χριστόν, ἀποσυνάγωγος γένηται. At Jn 15,27-16,2 Jesus tells his disciples that they will testify to him (ὁμεῖς δὲ μαρτυρεῖτε (περὶ ἐμοῦ) —which means: you will confess<sup>165</sup> me openly as the Christ, the Son of God) and that, as a result, they will become ἀποσυνάγωγοι. The "fear of the Jews" is alluded to in this pericope also, since Jesus warns them (μὴ σκανδαλισθῆτε) lest persecution cause them to give up the faith (comp. 6,61)<sup>166</sup> by refraining to "testify" or "confess" him openly.

These are not the only texts in Jn which reflect the difficult situation in which the disciples of Jesus came to find themselves as a result of the measures taken against them by the Jews after Jamnia (see below). The φόβος τῶν Ἰουδαίων is mentioned at 7,13; 19,38 and 20,19. Jn 19,38 is particularly instructive. Here we learn that Joseph of Arimathea was a μαθητὴς τοῦ Ἰησοῦ κεκρυμμένος δὲ διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων.

<sup>165</sup> O. Michel has justly remarked that the difference between μαρτυρεῖν and ὁμολογεῖν should not be overstressed (*TWNT* V, art. ὁμολογέω, 207, 7ff). They are related terms and μαρτυρεῖν, like ὁμολογεῖν belongs, in Jn, to the "juridical" confrontation between the disciples of Jesus and the "world" ("Jews").

<sup>166</sup> "Σκανδαλίζω ist wie γογγύζω ... geradezu ein terminus technicus für die Glaubenskrisis im Jüngerkreis". G. Stählin, *TWNT* VII, art. σκάνδαλον, σκανδαλίζω, 357, 17f.

From these texts (Jn 5,44; 12,42f; 9,22; 15,27-16,2; 19,38) it would appear that the fear of being persecuted by the Jews (more concretely: of being cast out of the Synagogue) is given by Jn as the reason which kept many Jews from believing (5,44) and which led others, who had believed, not to confess Christ openly—and perhaps even to deny him.<sup>167</sup> One can surmise that the desire to remain a “hidden disciple” of Jesus (19,38) must not always have been possible (the recitation of the Birkat ha-Minim!—see below) and that, when pressed, some may have abandoned the faith (μὴ σκανδαλισθῆτε 16,2).

This supposition is supported by Jn's presentation of John the Baptist and Peter. John the Baptist, we have said,<sup>168</sup> is presented as a “true confessor”, a Christian “avant la lettre”. His μαρτυρεῖν (comp. 15,27!) is evaluated by the evangelist as a “confession”: ὠμολόγησεν καὶ οὐκ ἡρνήσατο (1,20). Strangely enough, Jn adds: ὠμολόγησεν ὅτι ... Οὐκ εἰμὶ ὁ Χριστός. We mentioned that these words are an indirect testimony to (confession of) Christ.<sup>169</sup> This explains the strange formulation.<sup>170</sup> The normal Greek expression would have been: ἡρνήσατο καὶ εἶπεν Οὐκ εἰμὶ (which is exactly the expression used by Jn at 18,25). Jn obviously avoided the negative ἡρνήσατο in order better to present John as the one who confessed Jesus and did not deny him. Jn's presentation of Peter has undergone a change with respect to that of the Synoptics.<sup>171</sup> Peter is not presented as the only disciple who had the courage of following Jesus after his arrest, as in the older tradition. The details of the “denial” have also undergone a change in Jn. Jesus does not turn

<sup>167</sup> There is only one slight divergence between Jn 5,44 and 12,42-43. At 5,44 the Jews are said not to be able to believe because they do not seek the δόξα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, at 12,42 the leaders are said to believe but to be afraid of confessing Jesus because they love the glory of men more than the glory of God. The perspective at 12,42f is that of 19,38. One could perhaps explain the divergence by saying that at 5,44 the Jews do not seek the glory of God (at all), hence they cannot believe; at 12,42f it is a matter of degree: they love the glory of men more than the glory of God—their love for the glory of God is too weak to allow them to confess Jesus openly, yet strong enough to induce them to believe hiddenly. More likely we are dealing with two distinct but related situations; see below, pp. 245-253; esp. 252f.

<sup>168</sup> See pp. 211-215; esp. 212.

<sup>169</sup> See p. 196.

<sup>170</sup> Dodd (*Hist. Trad.*, 299) has pointed this out.

<sup>171</sup> Cf. E. Haenchen, “History and Interpretation in the Johannine Passion Narrative”, *Interpr* 24 (1970) 198-219, 205-206.

around and look at Peter (Lk 22,61); Peter does not weep bitterly (Mt; Lk), he does not even weep (Mk). The event is related as a fulfilment of the prophecy: "You will deny me" (13,38). The interest is clearly "to transmit his example as a deterrent warning to the Church".<sup>172</sup> Jn is calling upon his readers to confess (ὁμολογεῖν) Jesus as the Baptist did and not to deny (ἀρνέσθαι) him, as Peter did.

The ὁμολογία was a succinct expression of faith embodying the essence of what Christians believed concerning Jesus. It is in times of conflict and persecution that the ὁμολογία fulfilled one of its most important functions:<sup>173</sup> that of bearing witness to Jesus and to the Faith. It meant to declare oneself openly as a Christian and to accept the consequences.

The basic pattern of the earliest ὁμολογίαι comprises two elements: 1) the naming of Jesus; 2) the attribution of a "title" to him. The earliest form was Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός and it is this "form that was significant for the early Church in its relationship to Judaism".<sup>174</sup>

The ὁμολογία plays a greater role in Jn than first meets the eye.<sup>175</sup> The "pattern" Jn uses reflects the earliest confession formula (Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός), which was used by the early Church when confronted with Judaism.<sup>176</sup> This is the formula which is behind: Jn 9,22; 1,20; 7,26.41; 11,27; 20,31. Another important "confession formula" is reflected in other Johannine texts: Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ (1,34.49; 11,27; 20,31). The two are sometimes used in combination: Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ (11,27; 20,31). The most important aspect of the "confession formulas" mirrored in the Fourth Gospel is that the formula which confesses Jesus as the Messiah predominates conspicuously—which shows once again that we are in a Jewish setting.<sup>177</sup>

<sup>172</sup> Haenchen, *ibid.*, 206.

<sup>173</sup> For other "functions" of the ὁμολογία, cf. V. H. Neufeld, *The Earliest Christian Confessions* (Leiden, 1963), 108-126.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 146. Neufeld (140-144) holds that Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός and not κύριος Ἰησοῦς is the earliest Christian ὁμολογία.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 72-82.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, 82; 126; 146.

<sup>177</sup> The Jewish setting is also reflected by other "formulas": Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ... ὁ προφήτης (6,14; 7,41): ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ (1,49; 12,13); ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων (18,33.37.39; 19,3.19); ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ (6,69); ὁ ἄμνος τοῦ θεοῦ (1,29.36). These "titles" are all related to the messianic terminology of primitive Christianity. Neufeld, *ibid.*, 74-79.

Should one wish to complete the οὐχ ὁμολόγουν of Jn 12,42, it would have to be with ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ).<sup>178</sup> This is the confession which brought "dishonour" from the Jews upon the Jews who pronounced it and which entailed exclusion from the Synagogue. Jn, of course, is not the only evangelist who refers to the persecutions one must sustain as a Christian or who emphasizes the need of "perseverance in tribulation". He shares this view with the Synoptics. What is characteristic of Jn is that this persecution has taken on the concrete form of a threat which comes exclusively from the Jews and *which entails exclusion from the Synagogue*. The Synoptics predict trials before "governors and kings" (Gentile rulers) and speak of the necessity of bearing witness before the Gentiles (Mk 13,9-10; Mt 10,18; Lk 21,12). There is nothing of all this in Jn. In the Fourth Gospel what Christians have to fear is death not at the hands of the Gentiles, but at the hands of those who believe they serve God (i.e., Jews) or a fate which (for a Jew) is almost as bad as death: exclusion from the Synagogue. The persecutors are Jews and the persecuted are Jewish-Christians!

*The situation of Jewish-Christians in relation to the Synagogue after the Council of Jamnia and the Birkat ha-Minim*

Shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem (70 A.D.), Rabban Johannon ben Zakkai fled from the city to the Roman camp and obtained permission from the Roman commander to settle in Jamnia and establish a school there.<sup>179</sup> This event was to have an incalculable influence on the future of Judaism. From the schools at Jamnia, during the years which followed the destruction of Jerusalem, Judaism was to receive its reorganization and consolidation. It was here that the long strife between the opposed schools of Shammai and Hillel was brought to an end in favour of the latter and the possibility of schism eliminated; it was here that the doctors of the Law formed themselves into a Council, the Great Bet Din, for which Gamaliel II, the successor of Rabban Johannon, endeavoured to obtain recognition and submission to its authority from all Jews. The contemporaries of Gamaliel II and their immediate disciples (the period extends from 80 to 140 A.D., approximately) became the fundamental authorities of what may be called "normative" Judaism.<sup>180</sup>

It was under Gamaliel II that Simeon ha-Pakuli is said to have arranged the

<sup>178</sup> The two "titles" Χριστός and υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ are not to be opposed: Jesus is the Messiah as Son of God. Jn does not conceive the messiahship of Jesus along purely traditional lines. Cf. Neufeld, *ibid.*, 79-82 and esp. 93ff.

<sup>179</sup> On the historical background sketched here, cf. Moore, *Judaism*, I, 87ff; 292; 294; 365; II, 356.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 87-89.

Eighteen Benedictions, the daily recitation of which Gamaliel made obligatory for every man.<sup>181</sup> The prayer for the extirpation of heretics, the Birkat ha-Minim, was formulated by Simeon the Little, another disciple of Gamaliel II, and was introduced into the Shemoneh Esreh by order of Gamaliel. It thus became part of the liturgy of the Synagogue around 90 A.D. (shortly before the final redaction of the Fourth Gospel).

The Twelfth Benediction (Birkat ha-Minim), in its oldest Palestinian form, reads: "For apostates may there be no hope, and may the Nazarenes (הנצרים) and the Minim (המינים) perish".<sup>182</sup> The "Nazarenes" are obviously Christians (they had not yet become a heretical Christian sect), but a number of authors hold that the word did not belong to the original "blessing".<sup>183</sup> The question as to whom the Birkat is directed against therefore hinges on the meaning of the term "Minim". Are they Christians or Jewish Gnostics? If they are Christians, are they Jewish-Christians or Gentile-Christians?

Much ink has flown in an attempt to answer these questions, and unanimity has not been reached.<sup>184</sup> What may be considered almost certain is that the term "Minim" in the oldest Rabbinical texts designates heretical *Jews*. It is only later (from 180-200 onwards) that it became a designation for the followers of other "creeds" and Christians in particular.<sup>185</sup> Even Hirschberg, who holds that "the term Minim refers to Paul's adherents *par excellence*", does not deny that "the Talmudic literature ... evinces greater interest in those of Jewish origin".<sup>186</sup> As for the other question (whether the Minim are Jewish-Christians or Jewish-Gnostics), most authors would agree that the term "Minim" designates, primarily, Jewish-Christians, even if it may designate Jewish heretics more generally.<sup>187</sup>

The Birkat ha-Minim was a result of the consolidation of Judaism and the need felt to unify and centralize, the need for a "normative" Judaism. It is

<sup>181</sup> Cf. *Str.-Bill.*, IV, 208; 237; Moore, *ibid.*, I, 292.

<sup>182</sup> On the text of the Birkat ha-Minim, see Moore, *ibid.*, I, 292 with n. 8; III, n. 68; *Str.-Bill.*, IV, 212-213.

<sup>183</sup> Cf. J. Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ. A Study in the Controversy between Church and Synagogue* (London, 1962), 56-57.

<sup>184</sup> For good summaries of the question, cf. Jocz, *op. cit.*, 178-181; Schrage, *TWNT* VII, 847-849.

<sup>185</sup> H. Hirschberg ("Once Again—The Minim", *JBL* 67 (1948) 305-318), who refers to Büchler (318). K. G. Kuhn ("Giljonim und sifre minim"; in: *Judentum, Urchristentum, Kirche*, Festschr. J. Jeremias (Berlin, 1960) 24-61), in the few pages dedicated to the Minim (35-40), is also of the opinion that the term Minim in the older Rabbinical writings indicates *Jews* (cf. the material quoted on pp. 37-38). Jocz (*op. cit.*, 178-181) surveys the various opinions and comes to the conclusion that "the Minim were ... Christians: first Jewish Christians, then also Gentile Christians; later, when Christianity removed itself from the Jewish horizon, the appellation was given to any Jews of dissenting views" (180f).

<sup>186</sup> *Art. cit.*, 318.

<sup>187</sup> The principal opponent of this theory is F. C. Grant (*The Earliest Gospel* (New York, 1943), 92f); the arguments used by Grant are rather against than in favour of his theory, as Hirschberg (*art. cit.*, 305-311) has shown. Cf. also Jocz, *op. cit.*, 178-181.

interesting to note that "no Talmudic report dealing with the Minim can be traced to any date prior to the last decade of that (i.e., the first) century. But in this decade they make a rather sudden appearance in many religious controversies recorded by Talmudic literature".<sup>188</sup> Precisely up to this period Jewish-Christians represented a conventicle within the Synagogue, rather than a sect. It is a known fact that Jewish-Christians took active part in the prayers and rites of the Synagogue during the decades which followed Christ's death. The Birkat ha-Minim was introduced into the liturgy of the Synagogue in order to detect and expose "false" Jews. The prayer had to be recited aloud and attention was paid to its distinct recitation.

What concrete effect the introduction of the Twelfth Benediction had on driving Jewish-Christians out of the Synagogue is unknown, but it is clear that, with the end of the Jewish war (132-135 A.D.), the Church had already dissociated itself from Judaism. From this time on the Rabbinic invectives against Christians subside<sup>189</sup>—an obvious result of the fact that Christianity, in the eyes of Judaism, was no longer a form of heretical Judaism. The Church had become the Church of the Gentiles and Christianity a totally different religion!

When all these factors are considered, it appears that the strong opposition against the Minim at the end of the first century coincides with the period in which Judaism was closing its ranks and Jewish-Christians had still not dissociated themselves from Judaism. The Birkat ha-Minim was no doubt primarily directed against Jewish-Christians and must have contributed to drive them out of the Synagogue, which was exactly its main objective. Its introduction into the liturgy of the Synagogue makes sense only if those against whom it was aimed still took part in the liturgy. The Twelfth Benediction will, in time, change its wording to adapt to the changed situation.<sup>190</sup>

### *The situation after the Council of Jamnia, as reflected in Jn*

#### *Ἀποσυνάγωγος*

It is rather difficult to determine what ἀποσυνάγωγος γίνεσθαι in Jn actually means. It is obvious that it means being excluded from the συναγωγή, but the term itself can mean:<sup>191</sup> 1) the Synagogue building (in which case ἀποσυνάγωγος would mean that entry into any Synagogue was forbidden); 2) the synagogal gathering (in which case to become ἀποσυνάγωγος would imply the defence of participating in

<sup>188</sup> Hirschberg, *art. cit.*, 317f.

<sup>189</sup> Moore, *Judaism*, I, 172f.

<sup>190</sup> The other measures taken against the Minim are also directed against Jewish-Christians, as K. L. Carroll ("The Fourth Gospel and the Exclusion of Christians from the Synagogues", *BJRyL* 40 (1957-58) 19-32), borrowing from Hirschberg (*art. cit.*), has shown.

<sup>191</sup> Cf. Schrage, *TWNT* VII, 804; 806; 807; 828; 847.

any synagogal gathering); 3) the local Synagogue (in which case to become ἀποσυνάγωγος would exclude one from the local Jewish Synagogue); 4) the national-religious Jewish community of all Jews (in which case the ἀποσυνάγωγος would no longer be considered a member of the "chosen people").

In all probability, the ἀποσυνάγωγος of Jn has this last meaning. The term itself indicates that we are dealing with *exclusion* from the Synagogue. It is also clear that this exclusion was permanent. He who became ἀποσυνάγωγος was no longer under the jurisdiction of the Synagogue, he became like a pagan to his (orthodox) fellow-Jews. There is no parallel to this "ban" in the Rabbinic literature. The Rabbis speak of two degrees or levels of banishment: the thirty-day ban (נָדָר = שְׁמַתָּא) and the חֵרֶם. The חֵרֶם entailed permanent exclusion but, as C. H. Hunzinger has shown,<sup>192</sup> the word was not used with this meaning before the 3rd century. Only the נָדָר therefore can be taken into consideration when speaking of the Jewish "Bannpraxis" of the first two centuries A.D. The Johannine ἀποσυνάγωγος can obviously not be equated with the נָדָר, which was a temporary ban and which did not exclude from the Synagogue in a radical and definitive manner (the person who was under this ban remained subject to Jewish authority even during the thirty-day period). Even if the permanent ban (חֵרֶם) had been practiced earlier than the third century, it would not correspond to the Johannine ἀποσυνάγωγος either. Although permanent (not limited to a specific length of time), the חֵרֶם was not an irrevocable ban. It therefore remains "ein innersynagogales Zuchtmittel".<sup>193</sup>

The Qumran texts speak of exclusion from the Community (especially from the meals) as a punitive measure (cf. 1QS 6,24-7,25) and even of a permanent banishment from the Community. Although only one text presents permanent excommunication as a measure taken against a member who professes heretical views (1QS 7,17) and more frequently as a punishment for wilful transgression of the Law (1QS 8,16f.22f), the distinction should not be pressed<sup>194</sup> since the Torah is the dogmatic basis of the Community and, as we have seen, one who disregards the Torah is not to be neatly distinguished from

<sup>192</sup> *Die jüdische Bannpraxis im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter* (Diss. Göttingen, 1954), 65ff.

<sup>193</sup> Schrage, *TWNT* VII, 846, 26.

<sup>194</sup> Vs. Schrage, *ibid.*, 849, 7ff.



one who professes "heretical" views (the "dogmatic" and "moral" issues form a unit). Would Jn be adapting a Qumran practice and attributing it to the Jews? An affirmative answer seems very unlikely. It presupposes that: 1) Jn was acquainted with the Qumran discipline—something which cannot be denied, but is not certain; 2) disregarding historical fact, he had the Jews take measures against the Christians which they did not take. Even this is not impossible, but it is much more logical to suppose that such measures were actually taken by the Jews, especially since we know from Rabbinical sources that such was the situation which came to be after Jamnia.

If we return to the question: "What meaning did ἀποσυνάγωγος γίνεσθαι have for the evangelist and his readers and to what historical situation does it correspond?" the answer can only be: "It is to be connected with the measures taken at Jamnia, the Birkat ha-Minim, the purpose of which was to exclude (viz., expulse) heretical (viz., Christian) Jews from the Jewish community as a body (συναγωγή) in order to ensure the survival of Judaism". The situation reflected at Jn 9,22; 12,42f and 16,2 is that which prevailed towards the end of the first century, A.D. and this explains why the term ἀποσυνάγωγος could not have been used by the Synoptics nor by Paul.<sup>195</sup>

The background is the controversy Church—Synagogue and, more precisely: the "Jewish" Church (if one can use such a term) and the Synagogue at a time when they constituted two well-defined and opposed blocks. The situation of Jewish-Christians after Jamnia is projected back into (or rather: already seen enacted in) the period of Christ's ministry.<sup>196</sup> Jesus glorified God by honouring him, by doing his will and bringing his work to perfection. This brought

<sup>195</sup> From a historical point of view, ἀποσυνάγωγος, or an equivalent expression, could have been used in the writings which are contemporary with or posterior to the Fourth Gospel (Apoc, Heb, 2 Pet, etc.); *de facto* it is used only by Jn and is not to be found in any other writing, whether Jewish or Christian.

<sup>196</sup> After having striven to show that the Minim in the Rabbinical writings are Jewish-Christians, Carroll makes the startling statement: "It is generally agreed that the author of the Fourth Gospel was a Gentile" (*art. cit.*, 31). To the question, "Why did Jn and not the Synoptics speak of Christians becoming ἀποσυνάγωγοι?" Carroll replies: "The answer ... can be found in the late date ... and in the fact that the author was a Gentile" (*ibid.*, 19f). This, together with Jn's tendency to put his thoughts on the lips of his characters, would account for his use of the term and its projection into the past! There is a strident *non-sequitur* here. Only if the writer was a Jew can we explain the prominence he has given to the measures taken by normative Judaism against Jewish-Christians.

"dishonour" upon him in the eyes of the Jews; in reality it was his "glorification" and brought "honour" upon him. Similarly the disciple will be reviled and "dishonoured" by his fellow-Jews if he confesses Christ and follows him, but he will receive that δόξα which comes from God alone (17,22) and which brings true honour (12,26) with it—not in the eyes of the Jews, but in the eyes of God and those who serve him.<sup>197</sup> The δόξα which comes from God exists only within the Christian community and can be perceived only in faith. It is a sharing in the δόξα Christ himself has as the Son, and the love of *this* δόξα leads Christians to honour him as they honour the Father by confessing him openly and sharing his fate.

*The fear of becoming ἀποσυνάγωγος and the fear of confessing Jesus as the Christ*

In our opinion, it might be possible to determine the intent Jn was pursuing at 9,22; 12,42-43 and 15,27-16,2 with greater accuracy, but before attempting to do so a methodological question must be raised which touches not only the problem we are considering but other problems we have considered or will consider.

In examining the δμολογία in Jn, Neufeld first turned to the Johannine Epistles and then, with the aid of the conclusions attained, made return to the Gospel.<sup>198</sup> Yet Neufeld himself admits that the situation found in the Gospel is not only much less clear<sup>199</sup> (hence the recourse to the Epistles!) but also differs from that found in the Epistles.<sup>200</sup> So far in this work, the Johannine Epistles have been given little attention. The main reason for this is that the point of view or "horizon" of the Gospel and Epistles seem to differ considerably *as far as our topic is concerned*.

The Law has no role to play in the Epistles—the Jews, Israel, the Scriptures, Abraham, Moses, the prophets (Isaiah in particular), the

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<sup>197</sup> It should be noted that the opposition "glory (honour) which comes from God" —"glory (honour) which comes from men" is typically Palestinian and Pharisaical, as has been amply illustrated by *Str.-Bill.*, II, 553-556 (ad Jn 12,43). We might add that the perspective is also found in Qumran (1QH 10,27-29; 1QpH 10,10f). 1QH 10,27f presents a remarkable analogy with Jn 5,44 (יִכְבְּדוּ אִישׁ מִרְעֵהוּ).

<sup>198</sup> *Op. cit.*, 69-72; 82-89.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, 107. But on p. 89 the Gospel and Epistles are thrown into the same pot.

Sabbath, circumcision and even the idea of "fulfilment" (of the OT, the Scriptures, etc.) are totally absent.<sup>201</sup>

It can be no mere hazard that *all* the terms that are immediately connected with the Law (*νόμος*; Torah) should be absent, especially since both the Gospel and the Epistles come from the same tradition. One suspects that the addressees of the Epistles and/or the situation in which they find themselves are not the same as in the Gospel.

This seems to be the only explanation which can account for the total absence of a group of terms proper to the tradition behind both works.<sup>202</sup> The difference in terminology (viz., the total absence of a group of terms which are central to the Gospel) means that certain terms are not relevant—that the situation of those to whom the Epistles are addressed is different. Terminology and the "concepts" implied cannot be separated and the "concept" which is absent in the Epistles is precisely that of a hostile group called "Jews" and the categories proper to their way of thinking (Law, Moses, OT, etc.). This does not mean that the addressees of the Epistles are not Jews, but that their situation (if they are Jews) is different, as is illustrated by the manner in which *ὁμολογεῖν* is used in Jn and the Epistles.

Neufeld is certainly correct when he distinguishes between the "opponents" or "adversaries" in the Gospel and in the Epistles.<sup>203</sup> Unfortunately his distinction between the two forms of controversy is not accurate enough. According to Neufeld the controversy in Jn would be between Jews and Christians; in the Epistles between heretics and Christians.

In the Gospel the conflict is between the Jews and Jesus, between the disciples of Moses and the disciples of Jesus (i.e., between the Synagogue and the Church; the Church being composed of Jews). In the Epistles the "opponents" are not "Jews", or rather: whether the opponents are Jewish or not is of no importance. The "heretics"

<sup>201</sup> Ἰουδαῖος, Ἰσραήλ, νόμος, Μωϋσής, γράφω — γραφή — γραφαί (= OT), σάββατον, περιτομή, περιτέμνειν, προφήτης, πληροῦν (with ὁ λόγος, ἡ γραφή), Ἀβραάμ, Ἡσαίας and so forth, are not to be found in the Epistles. Furthermore, the OT is never once quoted—which makes the Epistles stand out not only from the Gospel, but from all other NT writings!

<sup>202</sup> That the Epistles are "occasional", "pastoral" writings is no explanation, on the contrary!

<sup>203</sup> *Op. cit.*, 107: "While the conflict in the gospel is pictured as Jewish-Christian ... in the epistles it is more clearly heretical-Christian ... although "Jewish" and "heretical" are not mutually exclusive".

are false brethren whose *national*-religious status is never reflected upon. Their being Jewish or not is irrelevant and their religious attitudes can be treated in complete independence from the "Jewish" question, so prominent in the Gospel.

Whether the "heretics" in the Epistles are Jews or not (they probably are)<sup>204</sup> and whether the true believers are Jews or not (they probably are) is of no importance. There is no opposition of two national-religious blocks, or better: of one national-religious block (the "Jews" of the Gospel) which considers another group (Christian-Jews) as no longer belonging to the Jewish community (*ἀποσυνάγωγοι*) and as constituting a separate entity. All we have in the Epistles are two religious factions, or better: a group of "heretics" who separate themselves from the Community by denying certain truths but who do not (apparently) consider themselves anti-Christian. The Epistles do not tell us whether the false brethren were Jews because this was not the point of controversy nor that which led them away from the "confession" of Jesus.

We cannot accept Neufeld's hypothesis of "Jewish defection" unless it is qualified *as not being a return to Judaism*.<sup>205</sup> If the "heretics" had reverted to Judaism we should find the same anti-Jewish polemic in the Epistles which we find in the Gospel, but this is totally absent.

We consequently refuse to use the Epistles in order to determine what *ὁμολογεῖν* means in Jn and the concrete situation it reflects. From the Gospel itself all that can be deduced is that the "Jews" declare those of their number who confess Jesus as the Messiah *ἀποσυνάγωγοι*. The strife is between "normative" Judaism and those whom the Jews consider apostates and traitors—Jewish-Christians. It is within this setting and exclusively within this setting that *ὁμολογεῖν* in Jn is to be viewed.

Where the Epistles can be of some assistance to us is in showing that the danger of apostasy was real, that some Christians had abandoned the faith and that this apostasy was connected with denying (*ἀρνεῖσθαι*) Jesus as the Christ. Here we are, to some extent, on common ground with the Gospel, although the "modalities" are

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<sup>204</sup> Cf. J. A. T. Robinson, "The Destination and Purpose of the Johannine Epistles", *NTS* 7 (1960-61) 56-65; r.p. in: *Twelve New Testament Studies* (London, 1965), 126-138.

<sup>205</sup> *Op. cit.*, 86-88. Rightly Robinson, *art. cit.*, 130-131.

quite different. One suspects that some Christians had already fallen away "from the beginning" and that this defection *in the Gospel* was prompted by the fact that some Jewish-Christians were unwilling to have their ties with their *ἔθνος* severed. The other side of the coin is that some Jews who were inclined towards Christianity did not take the decisive step because this would have meant separating themselves from Judaism as a national-religious body. Jn is writing either to prevent further defection or to win over some Jews, who were still hesitant, to belief and "confession" of Jesus as the Christ. Probably he was seeking to achieve both ends.

Our three texts (9,22; 12,42-43; 15,27-16,2) do not stand alone. They are but corroborations and offer valuable support to what is evident from many other indications given by Jn, as our investigation is attempting to show.

There is another "source" which can be of some value in understanding what we believe to be the *Sitz im Leben* we find in the Fourth Gospel. If we are to believe Justin's Dialogue with Trypho, the strife between Jews and Jewish-Christians was still very much alive in the year 150. The interest of Justin's text is that he is speaking with a Jew (so are Jesus and Jn) and that, in this context, he mentions that some Jews had confessed Jesus as the Messiah (*ὁμολογήσαντας ... τοῦτον εἶναι τὸν Χριστόν*) only to return later to Judaism by denying that Jesus was the Messiah (*ἀρνησαμένους ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ Χριστός*). Justin also refers to Jews who anathematized Christ (aorist: *καταναθεματίσαντας*) and who anathematize him as the Christ in their Synagogues (*ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς καταναθεματίσαντας καὶ καταναθεματίζοντας ἐπ' αὐτὸν τοῦτον τὸν Χριστόν*).<sup>206</sup> The situation is so close to Jn 9,22, etc., viewed against the background sketched above (the decision of the Council of Jamnia and the Birkat ha-Minim), that one can say, with a reasonable amount of certitude, that if Paul succeeded in emancipating the Gentiles from Judaism,<sup>207</sup> neither he nor Jn succeeded in emancipating Jewish-Christians from Judaism.<sup>208</sup>

<sup>206</sup> *Dialogue*, 47.

<sup>207</sup> Although some Jewish-Christians still insisted upon making Jews of their Gentile brethren, the Church had officially recognized the emancipation of the Gentiles from the "Jewish" Church.

<sup>208</sup> Cf. Jocz, *op. cit.*, 170-174.

d) *Moses accuses the Jews of not having believed him nor his "writings" (Torah) because they have not believed Jesus nor his "words"—Jn 5,45-47*

aa) *Moses, not Jesus, "accuses" the Jews before the Father—v. 45*

The relationship of these verses to v. 39 has already been mentioned.<sup>209</sup> The figure of Moses lurks behind vv. 37-39. Just as vv. 37f contain an implicit allusion to the Scriptures, which are then explicitly mentioned in v. 39, so too do vv. 37-39 (v. 39 in particular) contain an implicit allusion to Moses, who is then explicitly mentioned in vv. 45f. Vv. 45-47 are the conclusion of the whole debate related in chapter 5, they are not a simple repetition of v. 39.<sup>210</sup> Moses makes his appearance not directly as one who testifies (*μαρτυρεῖν*) in favour of Jesus (although this idea is behind vv. 46c,47a), but as one who accuses (*κατηγορεῖν*) the Jews. Both terms stem from the juridical sphere and are closely related, but there are grounds for distinguishing between the function ascribed to the *ἔργα*, OT revelation and the Scriptures in vv. 37-39 and that ascribed to Moses in vv. 45-47.

The office of "public prosecutor" was unknown to Jewish legal practice. The witnesses "against" were the "prosecutors", the witnesses "for" were the "advocates" of the defendant. It would therefore be wrong to consider the *κατήγορος* and *ὁ μαρτυρῶν κατὰ* as necessarily distinct.<sup>211</sup> Nevertheless, third persons, who were not witnesses in the strict sense (i.e., who were not able to bear witness which directly concerned the charge imputed), could also make their voice heard in favour or against the defendant.<sup>212</sup> An accuser (*κατήγορος*) is therefore not necessarily one who bears witness against; an advocate (*συνήγορος, παράκλητος*) not necessarily one who bears witness in favour of, even though this is usually the case. In Jn it is

<sup>209</sup> See above, pp. 231f.

<sup>210</sup> Vs. Bultmann, ad 5,45-47 (205 and n. 1): "Der Gedanke ist also der gleiche wie in v. 38f".

<sup>211</sup> Cf. J. Jeremias, *TWNT* IV, art. *Μωϋσής*, 871, n. 215: "Das palästinische Recht kennt keinen Staatsanwalt, sondern der Hauptbelastungszeuge ist Vertreter der Anklage, vgl. KBornhäuser NkZ 27 (1926) 353-363 ..."

<sup>212</sup> Betz, *Der Paraklet*, 36f: "Der Kreis der Zeugen war nicht beschränkt: ausser den Zeugen im strengen Sinn, die sich zum Tatbestand äusserten, konnte auch jeder andere, der beim Prozess zugegen war, das Wort ergreifen und seinen Einfluss für oder gegen den Angeklagten geltend machen. ... Zu solch einer Art von Gerichtsverfahren passt der Begriff *παράκλητος*, der ja nicht den bestellten Advokaten, sondern den 'herbeigerufenen' Beistand meint".

the difference which stands out, not the equivalence, since *μαρτυρεῖν* has an almost exclusively *positive* sense,<sup>213</sup> as is manifestly the case in Jn 5,31-39.

Would Moses, then, be testifying *against* the Jews in vv. 45ff (or testifying *to* Jesus and therefore *against* the Jews)? We believe that we would be doing injustice to the text were we to speak of Moses as a witness.<sup>214</sup> We are no longer exactly in the same perspective as that of vv. 31-39 (of v. 39 in particular). The Scriptures, etc., testify in favour of Jesus, Moses accuses the Jews. One might say Moses accuses the Jews in that he testifies against them and this he does because he testifies in favour of Jesus. From a logical point of view it is so, but what Jn wanted to show is rather that *the role of Moses has been reversed : from intercessor Moses has become the accuser of the Jews.*

The change of perspective, which marks off vv. 45-47 from v. 39, is further illustrated by the passage from the Scriptures to the author of the Scriptures. *Αἱ γραφαί* (v. 39) and *Μωϋσῆς* (v. 45f) are not used interchangeably. One could be tempted to think that Moses in vv. 45f simply stands for the Law, the Pentateuch or the OT as a whole. This would be an error. Moses is considered to be the author of the *γραφαί* (as is obvious from the *ἔγραψεν* and the *τοῖς ἐκείνου γράμμασιν*—vv. 46f), but he is presented in vv. 45f as a person, as the individual (author of *αἱ γραφαί*) who will accuse the Jews before God. The distinction, held by the great majority<sup>215</sup> but not by all exegetes,<sup>216</sup> is important if we are not to confuse the issues at stake.

<sup>213</sup> In the Fourth Gospel *μαρτυρεῖν* is found only twice used in a "negative" sense: Jn 7,7; 18,23. In both cases the sense is very close to *μαρτυρεῖν κατά*.

<sup>214</sup> Cf. Barrett, ad loc. : "a witness to Christ".

<sup>215</sup> S. Dillmann ("Jo 5,45-47 in der Pentateuchfrage", *BZ* 15 (1921) 139-148) gives a survey of all those who have held this opinion. Among them, Chrysostom (*P.G.* 59, 237) and Cyril Alex. (*P.G.* 73, 425) are worthy of special notice. They are followed by the overwhelming majority of exegetes (cf. *art. cit.*, 143ff). To these we can add: Loisy (417), Lightfoot, Bernard, Barrett. Lagrange distinguishes: Moses as accuser = person; as object of hope = Scriptures. Loisy has put it most aptly: "Moïse personnifie la Loi, mais il la personnifie très personnellement... comme le Christ personnifie l'Évangile; c'est une personification vivante, et ce n'est pas la Loi, c'est Moïse qui dénonce perpétuellement les Juifs..." (417).

<sup>216</sup> Bultmann is the most outspoken for identifying Moses, in v. 45, with the Torah: "Natürlich muss im Sinne von v. 38f erklärt werden; es liegt also nicht der mythologische Gedanke vor, dass Mose jetzt im Himmel steht und vor Gott Klage erhebt" (205, n. 1). Brown (226, ad 5,45) leans in the same direction (but cf. 229). W. Bauer and Dodd (330) also seem to be of Bultmann's opinion.

We are in the presence of a polemic directed against *another* expectation of the Jews: that Moses was their intercessor before God.<sup>217</sup> The evangelist turns his attention to this claim and makes of their "intercessor" the very one who will accuse (viz., who accuses)<sup>218</sup> them to the Father.

Some authors have pointed out that v. 45a,b was in some way made necessary in that the office of Jesus is that of judge,<sup>219</sup> not of accuser. In our estimation<sup>220</sup> the words go deeper than this. In Jn Jesus comes to reveal (testify to) the "truth". His mission is one of salvation, not of condemnation. That he should bring about a *κρίσις* (separation and condemnation) is unavoidable, but this negative aspect of his "work" is not the end for which he has come. Bringer of life, *Jesus is the "paraclete", the intercessor for his own before the Father. The role ascribed by Judaism to Moses is assumed by Jesus.*

*Moses as the intercessor for Israel. The Jewish background*

Intercessors appear in the OT, the Apocrypha, Qumran and Rabbinical literature,<sup>221</sup> even though it is only in the Rabbinical writings that the intercessors receive a special "title".<sup>222</sup> The role of such intercessors is to plead before God's tribunal in favour of sinful Israel (of sinful Israelites). The idea of intercession presupposes a juridical setting. Many venerable historical figures were considered to be intercessors for Israel before God: Abraham, Moses, Samuel, the prophets. In the Apocrypha it is especially Noah, Enoch and Moses who assume this role. Among all these intercessors, Moses occupies a place of honour. His function as intercessor is stressed in the OT, where J, E and D<sup>223</sup> present him as one who

<sup>217</sup> "Joh. 5,45-47 bringt eine ausdrückliche Polemik gegen die Erwartung, Moses sei ein Fürsprecher seines Volkes, er ist im Gegenteil der Verklager Israels". O. Michel, "Das Gebet des scheidenden Erlösers", *ZSyTh* 18 (1941) 521-534, 524. See below, n. 229.

<sup>218</sup> Grammatically both senses are possible. For the future: *Blass-Deb.*, § 339; Bernard. Most of the moderns prefer the present sense (Bultmann, Lagrange, Barrett, Westcott, W. Bauer, Lightfoot); Moses is already exercising his role as accuser.

<sup>219</sup> So Lagrange, Bernard, Lightfoot, Barrett.

<sup>220</sup> Cf. Hoskyns, 276.

<sup>221</sup> Cf. J. Behm, *TWNT* V, art. *παράκλητος*, 807-809; *Str.-Bill.*, II, 560-562. For Qumran: Betz, *Der Paraklet*, 56-64; 147ff, whose material is pretty well limited to Jub, which he considers (with Test L and most of eth Hen) as belonging to the Qumran circle (p. 3).

<sup>222</sup> Betz, *op. cit.*, 137-141. See below, n. 229.

<sup>223</sup> J = Ex 8,24-27; 9,27-29; 10,17-19; 33,12-15; Num 11,2. E = Ex 17,11-13; 32,7-14.30-34; Num 21,7. Dt = Dt 9,18ff.25ff; comp. 1,37; 4,21f. The figure of Moses as intercessor is behind the whole of ch. 33 (cf. Glasson, *Moses*, 104; 74-78). This aspect of Moses' figure is absent in P. For a fuller discussion, cf. A. Robert, *DBS* V, art. "Médiation", 1000f; von Rad, *Theol.*, I, 304-308.



intercedes and obtains mercy for Israel. In the OT it is because he is a prophet that Moses is an intercessor.<sup>224</sup> The function of intercessor was, according to OT scholars, one of the main functions of the prophet in ancient Israel.<sup>225</sup> It is no wonder that the intercessory role of Moses should be connected with his prophetic designation. This aspect is important because Jn 5,45-47 may be a reference to Dt 18,15-22, where God promises a "prophet like Moses".<sup>226</sup> Later Judaism, both orthodox and unorthodox, considered Moses in the same light, as can be gathered from the Apocrypha<sup>227</sup> and Rabbinical literature.<sup>228</sup> It is in the Rabbinical writings that Moses officially receives the "title" פרקליט סניגור (συνήγορος—παράκλητος).<sup>229</sup> As is natural in the case of contradictory terms, סניגור (פרקליט) and קטיגור are found used in conjunction with each other.<sup>230</sup> It would therefore not be over-subtle to see this opposition reflected in Jn 5,45, if Jesus is designated elsewhere by Jn as an intercessor (paraclete).

Contrary to 1 Jn, Jesus does not receive the *title* of "paraclete" explicitly in the Fourth Gospel. The title, however, is of secondary importance when one considers that Jesus' role as intercessor is so prominent in the Farewell Discourses (Jn 17 in particular). Furthermore, Jn 14,16 definitely designates Jesus as the first Paraclete, at least indirectly.<sup>231</sup> To this one must add that, in Jn, the "other Paraclete" (the Spirit), strangely enough, is *not* an intercessor in the strict sense at all. Among the functions of the Paraclete<sup>232</sup> all are

<sup>224</sup> "Précisément parce que Moïse est prophète, sa médiation spirituelle se présente d'abord sous forme d'intercession". Robert, *art. cit.*, 1000.

<sup>225</sup> Von Rad (*Theol.*, II, 59f) holds that in ancient Israel intercession was at least a "Hauptfunktion" of the prophet. Moses appears as an intercessor in J and D, where the prophetic role is stressed. The source material (Quellenwerk) of E also comes from a prophetic milieu. On the role of intercession in prophetism, cf. Robert, *art. cit.*, 1008ff; esp. 1009.

<sup>226</sup> On the "prophet-like-Moses", cf. Glasson, *op. cit.*, 27-32; Meeks, *op. cit.*, 24f; 45f; 168-171; 198-200; 250-252. Betz (*op. cit.*, 130), repeating Wellhausen, is too categorical in seeing a certain reference to Dt 18,15-22 in Jn 5,45-47; see below, n. 245.

<sup>227</sup> Cf. Meeks, *op. cit.*, 154-156; 159-161; Betz, *op. cit.*, 58-60.

<sup>228</sup> Meeks, *op. cit.*, 198-204; *Str.-Bill.*, II, 561; Behm, *TWNT* V, 809, 10ff.

<sup>229</sup> Ex R 18,3 (on Ex 12,29) (*Str.-Bill.*, II, 561); Pesiq R 10, where Moses acts as advocate against the angels who accuse (מקטריגים) the Israelites. The same opposition is found in Ex R 43 (141f) where Moses forces Satan (הקטיגור) out and defends Israel before God.

<sup>230</sup> Abot 4,11a; Targ Job 33,23 (*TWNT* V, 800, 15ff); Ex R 18 (80<sup>c</sup>) (*Str.-Bill.*, I, 142).

<sup>231</sup> On Jesus as first Paraclete and his relation to the second Paraclete, cf. Betz, *Der Paraklet*, 127-176.

<sup>232</sup> "Bezeugen", "Verherrlichen", "Erinnern", "Führen in die Wahrheit", "Künden der kommenden Dinge", "Ueberführen"; cf. Betz, *ibid.*, 176-215.

found attributed to the second Paraclete *except that of intercession*.<sup>233</sup> This function is that of the "first Paraclete", Jesus. He fulfills this role on earth, but it does not end with his death; on the contrary: it truly begins with his return to the Father.<sup>234</sup>

V. 45 presents a double opposition: 1) Moses is no longer the intercessor of the Jews, he is rather their accuser; 2) Jesus is the new advocate—he intercedes for the new Israel, the "people" of believers. The opinion of the Jews is shown to be groundless,<sup>235</sup> their hope vain. Their opinion is false: Jesus is not their accuser, Moses is; Moses is not their advocate, Jesus is the new advocate. Their hope is vain: it is directed towards Moses as their advocate, the one who will save them from "judgement";<sup>236</sup> in reality it is only faith in Christ which can accomplish this.<sup>237</sup>

bb) *Faith in Moses and his Torah—faith in Jesus and his "words"—vv. 46-47*

The two verses correspond perfectly to each other. V. 46a,b is an unfulfilled condition in present time, the imperfects indicating a continuing disbelief. Moses and Jesus are associated: the Jews do not believe in Moses—they do not believe in Jesus; if they believed in Moses, they would believe in Jesus. V. 46c (περὶ γὰρ ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἔγραψεν) affords the connecting link between v. 46a-46b and between vv. 46 and 47. Belief in Moses entails belief in Jesus because Moses wrote about Jesus. This leads to: "If you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?" Both because of the parallelism between v. 46 and v. 47 and because of the περὶ γὰρ ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος

<sup>233</sup> Betz, *ibid.*, 208f. The Paraclete is "...—trotz seines Titels und seiner sonstigen Parakletendienste—kein Fürsprecher im strengen Sinn. Er legt für niemanden Fürbitte ein. Dieser Dienst wird am wirkungsvollsten vor Gottes Thron vollzogen und darum von Christus übernommen ..."

<sup>234</sup> "Aber Jesus gibt mit seinem Weggang den Dienst als Fürsprecher nicht ab, sondern nimmt ihn im Gegenteil erst recht auf". *Ibid.*, 185.

<sup>235</sup> Bernard (ad 5,39) has correctly pointed out that δοκεῖν in categorical sentences (vs. questions) always means "you think, *wrongly*" in Jn; cf. 11,13,31; 13,29; 16,2; 20,15.

<sup>236</sup> Jn is not thinking of the "hope" set on Moses as the mediator of revelation (vs. Barrett, Lagrange, Schlatter), but of the "hope" set on Moses as "advocate, intercessor" for Israel (rightly Bernard, Bultmann, Lightfoot). Cf. esp. Michel, *art. cit.*, *ZSyTh* 18 (1941) 521-534, 524.

<sup>237</sup> The hope of Israel has become reality with the coming of Christ. Jn uses "hope" only here and of Moses, not of Christ. See below, n. 239.

ἐγγραφέν, the temptation again arises to equate belief in Moses with belief in his writings (the Torah) at v. 46. None of the commentators consulted explain the nature of "belief in Moses" and there is a general tendency to equate belief in Moses with belief in his writings.<sup>238</sup> We hold that the two must be distinguished. V. 46 deals with belief in Moses and in Jesus, v. 47 deals with belief in the words (writings) of Moses and the words of Jesus.

Significantly, the evangelist avoids saying that the Jews *believe* in Moses. They only *hope* in him. Their expectations do not deserve the name of "faith".<sup>239</sup> The conditional sentence (unreal condition) means that Jesus (Jn) denies that the Jews have faith in Moses. What was Jn alluding to? The commentators avoid the issue, yet Jn must have had something specific in mind. Why reproach the Jews for their lack of faith in Moses unless they themselves claim that they believe in Moses?

#### *Faith in Moses. The OT background*

In Exodus we read about the vocation of Moses. The Lord appears to him (Ex 3,2), calls him (3,4) and "sends" him (3,10.12.13.14.15; 4,13.28; 5,22). He is sent to announce the deliverance of God (3,16) and to bring it about (3,12 and *passim*). He is to speak the "words" the Lord spoke to him, the "words" with which he had sent him (4,28.30; comp. 2,18; 4,1.9.10-12). The question of the authentication of such a mission is immediately raised (3,12.13-18) and becomes the central issue in Ex 4,1-9.27-31. The need to authenticate his mission is expressed by Moses at Ex 4,1 in the words: *ἐὰν οὖν μὴ πιστεύσωσιν μοι μηδὲ εἰσακούσωσιν τῆς φωνῆς μου, ἐροῦσιν γὰρ ὅτι Οὐκ ὤπταί σοι ὁ θεός* (i.e., *οὐκ ἀπέσταλκέν σε* cf. 3,10.12.13, etc.). The three "signs" (*σημεῖα*) the Lord grants him to perform is the means whereby God authenticates Moses' mission: *ἵνα πιστεύσωσιν σοι ὅτι ὤπταί σοι κύριος ὁ θεός ...* (Ex 4,5). *Ἐὰν δὲ μὴ πιστεύσωσιν σοι μηδὲ εἰσακούσωσιν τῆς φωνῆς τοῦ σημείου τοῦ πρώτου, πιστεύσουσιν σοι τῆς φωνῆς τοῦ σημείου τοῦ ἑσχάτου. καὶ ἔσται ἐὰν μὴ πιστεύσωσιν σοι τοῖς δυοῖν σημείοις τούτοις μηδὲ εἰσακούσωσιν τῆς φωνῆς σου, λήμψῃ ...* and God allows Moses to work a third sign (Ex 4,8-9).

<sup>238</sup> The equivalence placed between belief in Moses and belief in his writings is pretty well taken for granted by most commentators. Others are more outspoken in setting the equivalence (Loisy, Bultmann, Odeberg, Barrett). Lagrange speaks of the "inspired word" yet admits that Moses appears "in person".

<sup>239</sup> The expectation set on Jesus is called "faith", not "hope", in Jn. A. Schlatter (*Der Glaube im Neuen Testament* (r.p. Darmstadt, 1963)), has rightly pointed out the difference which exists between saying that the Jews believed in Moses and saying that they hoped in Moses. He speaks of a "significant difference". "Für eine eigenmächtige, des göttlichen Grundes entbehrende Erwartung braucht Johannes 'glauben' nicht" (201).

After Moses has communicated to Aaron "all the *words* of the Lord with which he had sent him and all the *signs* he had charged him to do" (Ex 4,28), he and his brother go before the elders of Israel *καὶ ἐλάλησεν Ἀαρων* (= *Μωϋσῆς*, cf. Ex 4,16) *πάντα τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα, ἃ ἐλάλησεν ὁ θεὸς πρὸς Μωϋσῆν, καὶ ἐποίησεν τὰ σημεῖα ἐναντίον τοῦ λαοῦ, καὶ ἐπίστευσεν ὁ λαός...* (Ex 4,30f). After the crossing of the Red Sea, "Israel saw the great work" (*יִשְׂרָאֵל, τὴν χεῖρα*) *καὶ ἐπίστευσαν τῷ θεῷ καὶ Μωϋσῇ τῷ θεράποντι αὐτοῦ* (= *לַעֲבֹד*)—Ex 14,31.

Lastly, at Sinai, God says to Moses: "I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you for ever" (LXX: *καὶ σοὶ πισεύσωσιν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα* MT: *וְגַם בְּךָ יֵאֱמִינוּ לְעוֹלָם*)—Ex 19,9. These texts (we have quoted the LXX, but *πιστεύειν*, in the instances quoted, always corresponds to the Hifil of *אָמַן* in the MT) are important not only because they contain the "faith in Moses" theme we find at Jn 5,46; they also present striking analogies with other Johannine ideas. The analogies are too close and too numerous<sup>240</sup> to be dismissed as a mere coincidence, especially since it has been shown that Exodus typology may have had a deep influence on Jn.<sup>241</sup>

Moses is the one sent by God (*שֵׁלַח, ἀποστέλλειν*) as a deliverer—to lead the people out of Egypt into the promised land. If his mission is to be effective the people must believe in him, they must hear his voice and accept him as one sent by God. The most striking feature of the texts is that faith in God (in his word) cannot be separated from faith in the one whom he sent.<sup>242</sup>

The assertions of Ex 4,1-9.27-31 are fundamental not only for a correct understanding of the notion of faith in the OT,<sup>243</sup> they also show that Jn may, once again, owe one of his most distinctive ideas to the OT, to Exodus in particular. This background explains why Jn takes for granted that there is such a thing as "belief in Moses" and that it is both licit and desirable. The Rabbis had affirmed that one must believe Moses as one believes God.<sup>244</sup> Since the origin of Moses'

<sup>240</sup> Ex 14,31 recalls Jn 14,1; Ex 4,8 recalls Jn 14,11 and 10,38; Ex 4,1 ("hearing voice") recalls Jn 10,3; 16,27; 18,37. We have already drawn attention to Num 16,28, which also speaks of Moses' mission in terms which are very similar to those Jn uses of Jesus' mission.

<sup>241</sup> Cf. J. J. Enz, "The Book of Exodus as a Literary Type for the Gospel of John", *JBL* 76 (1957) 208-215; R. H. Smith, "Exodus Typology in the Fourth Gospel", *JBL* 81 (1962) 329-342. The most elaborate studies have been those of Glasson (*op. cit.*), and Meeks (*op. cit.*).

<sup>242</sup> Very well put by O. Michel (*Theologisches Begriffslexikon zum Neuen Testament* (Wuppertal, 1967ff), art. "Glaube", 567): "Der Glaube ist hier also an einen Auftrag gebunden, der ausdrücklich durch eine göttliche Legitimation bekräftigt wird. *Der Glaube an das Wort ist nicht lösbar von der Haltung zum Gesandten*" (I underline).

<sup>243</sup> "Grundlegend für den at. Glaubensbegriff sind die Aussagen von Ex 4,1-9.27-31". Michel, *ibid.*, 567.

<sup>244</sup> The most striking text is that of the Mek Ex 14,31 (quoted by Odeberg, 138f): "If in Moses, it follows that they believed in the Lord". J. Bonsirven (*Le Judaïsme*

works and words is to be found in God, to believe in Moses must mean to believe in Jesus who, like Moses (but in an eminent and unique manner), is also "sent" by God. However, lest one should conclude that Moses and Jesus are to be placed side by side, the evangelist adds (*περὶ γὰρ ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἔγραψεν*—v. 46c) that belief in Moses and belief in Jesus belong together not only because of the common origin of their words and works and the analogous nature of the mission entrusted to them, but because Moses is subordinated to Jesus as the lesser to the greater. The work and mission of Moses (we will see this in greater detail when dealing with Jn 1,17) are in function of the final revelation in Jesus.

With v. 46c we pass from belief in the person of Moses to belief in his writings. To believe in Moses (in his mission and authority) means to accept his "words" as the "word of God". These "words" have come down to the Jews principally in the form of "writings"—the written Torah, the OT as a whole.<sup>245</sup> Now, these writings of Moses have Jesus as their object: to believe in Moses means to believe in Jesus, the one about whom he wrote. V. 47 reiterates and explains more fully: "If you do not believe his writings, how can you believe my words?"<sup>246</sup> The thought is very close to v. 46, but we have passed from the person of Moses and the person of Christ to their "words": the Torah and the *ἀλήθεια*. The Jews hold that the Scriptures are the inspired word of God—that they "believe" them

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*Palestinien au temps de Jésus Christ* (Paris, 1935), I, 253) quotes, in support of the statement that to believe in Moses is to believe in God: Mek Ex 19,9; S Dt 1,6(5),66b; b Joma 5b. Similarly, to speak against Moses is to speak against God (cf. Bonsirven, *ibid.*, 254; S Num 12,8; Cant R 2,15 = Berak 63b).

<sup>245</sup> Bernard (ad loc.) refers to Dt 18,18.19; Brown mentions this passage but also refers to the whole Law; Betz (*Der Paraklet*, 130) sees a certain reference to Dt 18,15-22. Hoskyns and Loisy reject a specific reference to Dt. It is better understood as a reference to the OT (Barrett, Lagrange, W. Bauer, Hoskyns, Odeberg) or to the whole Law (Bultmann; Schlatter, *Der Glaube*, 201; Lightfoot; Loisy).

<sup>246</sup> That there is a formal opposition between the *written* "word" and the *spoken* "word" is held by Schlatter, ad loc., (cf. also *Der Glaube*, 201f) and Westcott. Bernard, Bultmann, Barrett, Lagrange, Loisy hold there is no such opposition. The case against Schlatter is made by Loisy: the relation is between Jesus and Moses, not between the writings and the words. "Ces termes sont choisis simplement pour caractériser la forme respective des deux enseignements, non pour signifier quelque autre différence ..." To speak of the greater prestige of the written word "tendrait à diminuer l'autorité de 'la parole' évangélique" (417, n. 2). The thought is probably: if the Jews do not believe in the "writings" they accept, how can they believe in the "word" Jesus speaks, the "new doctrine" (Lagrange)?

and understand them. Jn (Jesus) holds that the Scriptures are a "witness" to Jesus (v. 39), that they have the person of Jesus as their object (46c) and that to "believe" or understand them means to see them in this light. He not only affirms that the Jews do not believe in the words of Jesus (of the Gospel)—something they would readily admit, he also denies that they believe in the Scriptures—something they would never admit—and that it is this which makes them blind to the Christian message (*πῶς πιστεύετε* stresses the outcome—one must believe the Scriptures in order to believe in Christ).

Behind this polemic we can discern the claim of the early Church : the Christian interpretation alone does justice to the OT—the Jews do not understand the Scriptures. And behind this claim we can discern the accusation of the Jews : the Christians distort the sense of the Scriptures and are unfaithful to the teaching of Moses.<sup>247</sup> We can also discern the opposition : disciples of Moses—disciples of Jesus, which comes to light in chapter 9. This has no doubt contributed to the choice of terminology : belief in Jesus, belief in his word—belief in Moses,<sup>248</sup> belief in his writings.

Jn sees no real opposition between Moses and Jesus, Torah and Gospel. The Torah is absorbed into the higher reality represented by Christ. The disciples of Moses should become disciples of Jesus. If this does not come about, the Torah becomes a "Verhängnis" and those who cling to it, as if Jesus had not come, deserve neither the name of "disciples of Moses" (since Moses disowns them) nor that of "followers of the Torah" (since they do not understand that it is written about Jesus). For Jn the real opposition becomes that which exists between the "Jews" (those who *presume* they are disciples of Moses and followers of the Torah because they reject Jesus and his

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<sup>247</sup> We will return upon the accusation the Christians make against the Jews further on in the dissertation, but the thought is already expressed at Jn 5,39 and, especially, in the ironical turn Jn gives to the accusation of the Jews that Jesus and his teaching are opposed to the Law (see above, Part One, Chapter Three).

<sup>248</sup> *Πιστεύειν Μωϋσεϊ*. The expression is very unusual for Jn. Never do we find *πιστεύειν* in Jn with an object other than Jesus (his "word": 2,22; 4,50; 12,38; "works": 10,38) or the Father (5,24), God (12,44; 14,1). Where men or their word are involved Jn uses *πιστεύειν διὰ* (1,7; 4,39.42; 12,11; 17,20). The sense in Jn 9,18 is not technical (*πιστεύειν περί*). Jn 9,27 shows the care with which Jn avoided using *πιστεύειν* where the testimony or words of a person other than Jesus (the Father) are concerned : *οὐκ ἠκούσατε* is used rather than *οὐκ ἐπιστεύσατέ μοι*. Jn 2,22 is an exception and offers a good parallel to Jn 5,47 : *καὶ ἐπίστευσαν τῇ γραφῇ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ ὃν εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς*. Thus Moses is the only person in the Fourth Gospel of whom the verb *πιστεύειν* is used.

message), who are children of the devil (8,42.44.47), and "Israelites"<sup>249</sup> or "believers" (those who realize that the whole function and value of the Torah is to lead to Jesus), who are children of God (8,41f; comp. 1,12f).

### 3. THE TESTIMONY JESUS ADVANCES IN DEFENCE OF HIS TEACHING (SELF-REVELATION) IS VALID ACCORDING TO THE LAW—Jn 8,12-20

The section we now wish to consider is opened by the statement *πάλιν οὖν ἐλάλησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων ...* It is followed by a revelation formula (*ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου*) to which the Jews take exception and which is defended by Jesus. The section closes with the words: *ταῦτα τὰ ῥήματα ἐλάλησεν ἐν τῷ γαζοφυλακίῳ διδάσκων ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ*. Thus the *λαλεῖν* of Jesus is conceived of as *διδαχή*. Vv. 14-19 are a defence of Jesus' teaching, his self-revelation (*λαλεῖν, διδάσκειν*).

#### A) *The unity and articulation of Jn 8,12-20*

Jn 8,12-20 may be taken as a unit. It is so accepted by the majority of exegetes.<sup>250</sup> There is some difficulty with regard to v. 12. Bultmann considers it foreign to our pericope and has vv. 13-20 follow upon 7,19-24.<sup>251</sup> It may well be, as Schulz maintains, that v. 12 represents an isolated *logion* which was inserted by the evangelist at this point.<sup>252</sup> Whatever the origin of the *logion*, we believe that v. 12 forms an excellent introduction to the following section and that we should not try to find a better place for it than the evangelist has given it.

The main argument in favour of its removal: that the theme of light is not mentioned in the following verses, is not decisive. 1) Since there is no break with chapter 7 and the setting seems to continue to be the Feast of Tabernacles,<sup>253</sup> the theme of light is perfectly in

<sup>249</sup> See below, pp. 293ff.

<sup>250</sup> It is so accepted by Hoskyns (330f); Dodd (*Interpretation*, 346); Lightfoot, (189f); Loisy (550ff); Lagrange (231ff); Brown (339f); J. P. Charlier ("L'exégèse johannique d'un précepte legal: Jean 8,17", *RB* 67 (1960) 503-515, 504); Barrett (275) and W. Kern ("Der symmetrische Gesamtaufbau von Jo 8,12-58", *ZKT* 78 (1956) 451-454, 452).

<sup>251</sup> Comm., 209ff.

<sup>252</sup> S. Schulz, *Komposition und Herkunft der Johanneischen Reden* (Stuttgart, 1960), 74-76.

<sup>253</sup> See what has been said above, pp. 56ff.

context. Jn 8,12 is thus an anticipation of Jn 9, where the two symbols of water (Jn 7) and light (Jn 8) will be brought together. 2) V. 12 is a *μαρτυρία* Jesus bears to himself. It is proper of light to manifest itself by its own brilliance—the affirmation is thus an excellent introduction to the idea of Jesus' self-witnessing. It is of interest to recall that the *μαρτυρία* of John the Baptist was also to Jesus as the "light" (cf. 1,7.8). The claim Jesus makes for himself at 8,12 (cf. 3,19-21, where Jesus makes this claim for the first time), that of being the "light of the world", the "light of life", is rightly construed as a *μαρτυρία* by the Pharisees and it is this *μαρτυρία* Jesus bears to himself which is challenged by them, giving rise to vv. 13-20. 3) The *ἐλάλησεν* of v. 12 forms an inclusion with the *ἐλάλησεν* of v. 20. The verb is of great weight in Jn, as we have said, and is used in a quasi-technical sense to introduce "words" of revelation.

It must be admitted, however, that vv. 12-20 constitute a unit which is not so smooth as one would desire. Vv. 14c-16 are somewhat intrusive, even though the theme of *κρίσις* is intimately related to that of *μαρτυρία*. It is no wonder that various hypotheses have been advanced concerning "interpolations". Wellhausen and Spitta hold that vv. 15-16 are an interpolation.<sup>254</sup> Bultmann<sup>255</sup> holds that the *κρίσις* theme is "befremdlich", unless one transpose vv. 13-20 and interpret the verses in the "Zusammenhang" of chapter 5. As for v. 15, it is an addition of the evangelist. Brown<sup>256</sup> holds that vv. 14c,d-16 are an addition or, at any rate, disturb the sequence. The theory of Wellhausen and Spitta is unacceptable. V. 17 follows very well upon *ὅτι μόνος οὐκ εἰμί, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ*, but can hardly be a continuation of v. 14, where only *one μαρτυρία* is mentioned. We would at least have to leave out *ὅτι οἶδα πόθεν ἦλθον καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγω* and treat v. 17 as a new start (leaving out the *καί*). Brown's hypothesis labours under a similar difficulty. V. 17 cannot follow logically upon v. 14b. Jesus states that, even if he testifies to *himself*, his testimony is truthful and then speaks about the testimony of *two* witnesses.

If the relationship between *μαρτυρεῖν* and *κρίνειν* is not given due

<sup>254</sup> J. Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Johannis* (Berlin, 1908), ad loc.; F. Spitta, *Das Johannes-Evangelium als Quelle der Geschichte Jesu* (Göttingen, 1910), ad loc.

<sup>255</sup> Comm., 211, n. 3.

<sup>256</sup> Comm., 343.



consideration,<sup>257</sup> Bultmann's rearrangement of the texts could account for the appearance of the *κρίσις* theme (although such a transposition raises other difficulties), but it cannot explain why vv. 15-16 fit so poorly into the *immediate* context<sup>258</sup> (even if v. 15 is treated as an addition of the evangelist).<sup>259</sup> Vv. 13-14 and 17-18 deal exclusively with Jesus' *μαρτυρία*. There is definitely a logical gap between v. 16 and v. 17. The principle enunciated in v. 17 does not apply to the *κρίσις* but to the *μαρτυρία* of Jesus. Even if v. 18 comes as a clarification of v. 17, the fact remains that the transition from v. 16 to v. 17 is very abrupt and that v. 17 seems to relate the legal principle contained in v. 17 to the *κρίσις* which Jesus does not pronounce of himself but in union with the Father, rather than to the *μαρτυρία* of Jesus and the Father (v. 18). In order to be perfectly logical, the text would have to read :

- 14a,b καὶ ἐγὼ μαρτυρῶ περὶ ἑμαυτοῦ, ἀληθὴς ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία μου,  
 16b ὅτι μόνος οὐκ εἰμί, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ.  
 17 καὶ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ δὲ τῷ ὑμετέρῳ γέγραπται ὅτι δύο ἀνθρώπων  
 ἡ μαρτυρία ἀληθὴς ἐστίν.  
 18 ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ μαρτυρῶν περὶ ἑμαυτοῦ καὶ μαρτυρεῖ περὶ ἐμοῦ  
 ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ.

The question that faces us, however, is the meaning the text has as it now stands.

The objection the Pharisees raise against Jesus' self-witness (v. 13) is not to be found, as such, in the OT. It is a Rabbinical principle according to which no man can testify on his own behalf. We have already seen that, at Jn 5,31, Jesus seems to accept this principle as

<sup>257</sup> A transposition, which would be motivated by the "surprising" appearance of the *κρίσις*-theme in vv. 15f, disregards the relationship which exists between *μαρτυρεῖν* and *κρίνειν*.

<sup>258</sup> This is the opinion of Bultmann, who speaks of a "Zusatz des Evangelisten zur Quelle" (211, n. 3).

<sup>259</sup> B. Noack (*Zur johanneischen Tradition. Beiträge zur Kritik an der literarkritischen Analyse des vierten Evangeliums* (Copenhagen, 1954), 153) also holds that vv. 15-16 disturb the logical sequence. He rejects any attempt to establish their original place or to conclude that they are a "spätere Einschübel". They were introduced here from (oral) "tradition" by the evangelist because of a "Stichwortverbindung" (the opposition *ὑμεῖς* — *ἐγὼ*, which is found in v. 14, would have caused the introduction of v. 15; v. 15 would have induced—*κρίνω*!—v. 16).

binding even in his case and adduces witnesses which, in their "exterior", "visible" reality (as distinct but not separate from the testimony Jesus bears to himself), must needs be accepted by the Jews.<sup>260</sup> We also said that what is apparently conceded by Jesus as applying to him also would be taken up once again in Jn 8,12-20 in an endeavour to show the *μαρτυρία* of Jesus to himself is valid.

What has been said at Jn 5,31-40 should not be lost sight of. The apologetic value of the "testimonies" listed by Jesus at Jn 5,31ff ultimately depends upon whether one is able to see the *ἐργα*, OT revelation and the Scriptures as *testimonies of the Father to Jesus*. They are not understood or perceived as such by the Jews precisely because they do not wish to come to Jesus (5,40), to believe (5,41-44). We also pointed out that all the "testimonies" adduced can be reduced to that of the Father, that he is the *ἄλλος* (5,32) who testifies to Jesus.

With a method which is typical of him, Jn takes up the idea of the testimony of the Father once again at 8,12-20 in an attempt to show that the testimony of the Father finds its most adequate and most perfect expression *in the testimony of Jesus*. The thought is already present in v. 14, but is given full development only in vv. 17-18.

B) *The reason why Jesus' knowledge of his origin and destiny guarantees the truthfulness of his μαρτυρία and, conversely, the reason why the ignorance of the Pharisees concerning Jesus' origin and destiny hinders them from recognizing the truthfulness of his μαρτυρία—v. 14*

Bultmann interprets v. 14 in the light of the Gnostic myth: it is the knowledge Jesus has of his origin and destiny, not his origin and destiny as such, which determines the validity of his self-witnessing.<sup>261</sup> A confirmation of the Gnostic background is seen by Bultmann in the fact that the disciples, like Jesus, are presented as "strangers" to the world and know their origin and destiny.<sup>262</sup> He admits, however, that the "Herkunftsbezeichnung" has become a "Wesenscharakteristik" in Jn and that the "knowledge" itself has been "demythologized" since there is no longer any question of the heavenly journey of the soul.

<sup>260</sup> See above, pp. 234ff.

<sup>261</sup> Comm., 210-211.

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*, 102, n. 1.

If Bultmann is right, we would expect Jn to stress the idea of the *knowledge* Jesus has of his origin and destiny elsewhere in the Gospel. But this is hardly the case.<sup>263</sup>

a) *The knowledge Jesus has of his origin and destiny*

The origin and destiny of Jesus are given great relevance in the Fourth Gospel, not so the *knowledge* Jesus has of his origin and destiny. Our text (8,14) is the only text in which *Jesus* speaks of the *knowledge* he has of his *πόθεν* and *ὅπου*; only at 13,3 does the evangelist again make reference to such knowledge.

An unbiased examination of the Fourth Gospel reveals that it is the origin and destiny of Jesus, not the *knowledge* he has of his origin and destiny, which play the determinant role and which make of Jesus the Revealer. Jn has Jesus speak of his being from (having come from ... to return to) heaven (above, the Father, God) only in order to express the "Wesen" of Jesus. The knowledge Jesus has of his origin and destiny is but the result of the knowledge Jesus has of his being (and of the Father—cf. 7,29!). It is because Jesus is the Son of God (and knows it) that he can reveal God (by revealing himself).

b) *The knowledge of the disciples (the ignorance of the Jews) concerning the origin and destiny of Jesus*

The emphasis in Jn is not on the knowledge the disciples have of Jesus' origin and destiny but on the *knowledge of Jesus*, who he is and what he represents for man (and on the *knowledge of the Father*, which is implied in this).

Thus *εἰδέναι* is found with Jesus as object at 1,26.31.33; 4,10.22.25.42; 7,28; 8,19; with the Father as object at 7,28.29; 8,19.55; 15,21. *Γινώσκειν* is found with Jesus as object at 1,10; 6,69; 7,26; 8,28; 10,14.38; 12,16; 14,7.9.20; 16,3; with the Father (God) as object at 8,27.55; 10,15; 14,7; 16,3; 17,3.25.

The texts which speak about *knowledge* of Jesus' *origin* are

<sup>263</sup> That the *πόθεν* and *ὅπου* of Jesus have an important place in the Fourth Gospel is undeniable. With regard to his *πόθεν*, we have only to think of such formulas as *ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*; *ἐκ, παρά, ἀπὸ θεοῦ, τοῦ πατρὸς*, etc., and of such verbs as *πέμπειν, ἀποστέλλειν, καταβαίνειν, ἔρχεσθαι* etc.; with regard to his *ὅπου*, we need only recall the frequent use of *πρὸς τὸν πατέρα* and of such verbs as *ὑπάγειν, πορεύεσθαι, ἀναβαίνειν*.

relatively seldom (with εἰδέναι : 3,2; 7,27f; 9,29f; with γινώσκειν : 7,27; 17,8.23.25;—to which 7,33-36 and 8,21f should be added);<sup>264</sup> those which speak of *knowledge* of Jesus' *destiny* are even more rare (only 14,(4).5, with the verb εἰδέναι). Jn 8,14 is the only text which speaks of the *ignorance* of the Jews concerning Jesus' origin *and* destiny. Only Jn 8,14 speaks of the *ignorance* of the Jews concerning the *destiny* of Jesus; the same is said of the disciples at 14,5. Thus, the formula we find most frequently is that which refers to the *knowledge (ignorance)* of Jesus' *origin*.

We have spoken <sup>265</sup> about the role the ignorance of Jesus' origin plays in Jn 7-9 and have seen that this theme is found in the chapters in which the question of Jesus' "Wesen" becomes a burning issue. We also saw that the ignorance of Jesus' ποθεν illustrates the ignorance of the Jews concerning the *person* of Jesus (who he is). It is not the knowledge or ignorance of Jesus' origin as such which is of interest to Jn.

c) *The knowledge the disciples (the believers) have of their origin and destiny*

Is there a text in which the evangelist speaks about the *knowledge* the disciples have of *their* origin and destiny? Bultmann quotes Jn 14,4 as referring to the knowledge they have of their destiny, but his statement: "das Wissen um ihr Wohin ist ... direkt 14,4 ausgesprochen"<sup>266</sup> is inaccurate. Jn 14,4 states that the disciples know the *way* (ὁδός) to where *Jesus* is going, not where he is going.

<sup>264</sup> Although the verbs εἰδέναι and γινώσκειν are not found in these sections, we are dealing with the theme of ignorance concerning the ὅπου of Jesus. The texts are closely related. At 7,33-36, when Jesus says: "Where I go you cannot come", the Jews ask: "Does he intend to go to the dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?" At 8,21-22 Jesus repeats himself and the Jews ask: "Will he kill himself?"

<sup>265</sup> Above, pp. 26-28. We are dealing with a Johannine literary device, that of "misunderstanding". The words of Jesus are misunderstood by the Jews and given two different interpretations which, ironically, are both true: the teaching of Jesus will be preached in the Diaspora and Jesus will lay down his life freely. The purpose of Jn is to bring out the ignorance of the Jews concerning Jesus' person and mission. He certainly does not wish to say that the ignorance of Jesus' "whither" is what prevents the Jews from following him where he is going, much less that ignorance of *their* destiny is to blame. Jn 8,21.24 makes clear that not being able to follow Jesus where he goes is "to die in one's sin" and that the condition for avoiding this is to believe that Jesus IS HE.

<sup>266</sup> Comm., 102, n. 1.

Thomas, speaking for all the disciples, objects: οὐκ οἶδαμεν ποῦ ὑπάγεις, πῶς δυνάμεθα τὴν ὁδὸν εἰδέναι? Bultmann glosses the text. Although he accepts the reading: ὅπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω οἶδατε τὴν ὁδόν, he interprets as if the text read: ὅπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω οἶδατε καὶ τὴν ὁδὸν οἶδατε.<sup>267</sup>

The "place" is the central idea in 14,1-3, but beginning with 14,4 it is the "way" which becomes the main issue. It is the "way" the disciples "know", not the "destiny". It is in knowing Jesus, who is the "way" insofar as he is the "truth" and the "life", that the disciples will be able to follow Jesus to the Father.<sup>268</sup> If Jn had been reflecting the Gnostic myth, we would have expected him to have given primary emphasis to knowledge of the ὅπου, not to knowledge of the "way". As for the theme of the "place" and the "way", it is deprived of all "spatial" dimension (vs. Gnosticism).<sup>269</sup>

The ὅπου and the τόπος of 14,2-4 are figures of speech which indicate union with God. Going to the Father means coming to know the Father, being united with him, and this comes about through knowledge of (union with) Jesus.

Thus, in the one isolated instance in which Jn alludes to the knowledge believers have of *Jesus'* ὅπου (Jn never speaks of the knowledge believers have of *their* destiny) this knowledge is reduced to knowledge of Christ's person and of God in him.

As for knowledge the believers have of *their* origin, it is a theme which, like the knowledge believers have of *their* destiny, is not to be found in the Fourth Gospel. Believers are said to be ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ (8,47), but they have not come from God. The disciple is "born" of God (1,12f), from above (3,3), of Spirit (3,5.8) and this distinguishes him from Jesus, who "comes" from the Father, from above.<sup>270</sup> He can therefore hardly be expected to "know" about his origin!

<sup>267</sup> This reading is very well attested, almost as well as the *lectio brevior*, but is not in harmony with the objection raised by Thomas. Bultmann (465f) comments: "1. ... ihr wisst ja, wohin ich gehe. Es heisst ja nicht nur ὅπου ὑπάγω οἶδατε, sondern zugleich (οἶδατε) τὴν ὁδόν. Also 2: ihr wisst auch den Weg dorthin" and adds (n. 1): "Der doppelte Sinn tritt in der Leseart von K D ... noch deutlicher hervor".

<sup>268</sup> For an analysis of the literary structure and meaning of Jn 14,5-6, cf. de la Potterie, *art. cit.*, *NRT* 88 (1966) 907-942, 916f.

<sup>269</sup> For further reasons which militate against explaining Jn 14,2-6 in the light of Gnosticism, cf. W. Michaelis, *TWNT* V, art. *δόξ*, 86-88; de la Potterie, *art. cit.*, 917-926.

<sup>270</sup> Cullmann (*Christology*, 298) speaks of Jesus' "birth from God". Terms such as "father", "son", "only-begotten" normally refer to birth, but Jn carefully avoids using γεννᾶν or equivalents when speaking of Jesus. The theme of "birth" is reserved

One is left with Jn 8,14, which would be the only text in which Jn would be justifying Jesus' right to bear witness to himself by having recourse to a mode of expression borrowed from the Gnostic myth. In our opinion the text is better explained by categories which are much more congenial to Jn and which belong with certitude to the thought-patterns of the Fourth Gospel.

An influence of the Gnostic myth on Johannine thought cannot be ruled out, but his use of *ὁδός* can much better be accounted for by having recourse to the Jewish tradition and to speculation on the Torah in particular.<sup>271</sup> At Jn 14,2-6, the emphasis falls upon the "way".<sup>272</sup> In the OT (especially in Dt) the "way of the Lord" is the path marked out for man by the will of God.<sup>273</sup> So much so, that *ἐντολή* may be used as a synonym for the "way".<sup>274</sup> We shall see that *ἐντολή* (מצוה) is used in Dt to designate the Law as expression of the divine will and that the Johannine use of this term reflects its "nomistic" colouring.<sup>275</sup> It is true that *ὁδός* is not found used "absolutely" (*ἡ ὁδός*) in the OT.<sup>276</sup> But the Apocrypha and Qumran use "the way" absolutely<sup>277</sup> and דִּבְרֵי is often used in parallelism with or equivalently for the Law and precepts of God.<sup>278</sup> Furthermore, in all these writings, there is a close relationship between the "way of the Lord", "truth" and "life",<sup>279</sup> just as the association of the Torah (commandments) with "truth"

for the "children of God" who are reborn, born anew. Incidentally : the singular lesson at 1,13 does not seem to fit this aspect of Johannine theology.

<sup>271</sup> Michaelis rejects any derivation from Gnosticism or Philo and writes, "Eher könnte man daran denken, dass in J 14,6 eine Antithese gegen die Thora vorliegt" (*ibid.*, 85, 34ff). A much stronger case can be made for this than Michaelis suspects.

<sup>272</sup> Cf. de la Potterie, *art. cit.*, 907-917.

<sup>273</sup> Cf. Michaelis, *TWNT* V, 50, 49ff.

<sup>274</sup> Michaelis does not go far enough when he states that "*ὁδός* wird fast synonym zu *ἐντολή*" (*ibid.*, 51, 15f). The texts he quotes (*ibid.*, 51, 17ff and n. 30) show that they are synonymous.

<sup>275</sup> See below, pp. 431-451; esp. 448f.

<sup>276</sup> Rightly Michaelis (*ibid.*, 85, 30f), but it is too great a leap to conclude that "eine Nachwirkung des AT liegt nicht vor" in Jn 14,6. He himself admits that the influence of OT usage is very present in the meaning of the term found in the Apocrypha (*ibid.*, 56, 24ff).

<sup>277</sup> 4 Esd 14,22; 1QS 9,18.19.20.21; 10,21; 11,13; CD 1,13; 2,6; 1QH 4,4; 12,34.

<sup>278</sup> 2 Bar 44,3; Jub 23,26; Hen 99,10. In Qumran the texts are numerous : cf., e.g., 1QS 9,12-24; CD 1,10-13; 2,6; further 1QS 1,12f; 8,14f; 9,9; etc.; CD 3,14-16; 1QH 15, 8-13.18f.

<sup>279</sup> Ps 118(119),30.37; Ps 85,11; Wisd 5,6; Tob 1,3; Ps 15,11; Prov 5,6; 10,17. In these texts the "way" is a "way of life" which is in conformity with the Law. Especially interesting are some Qumran texts, where the "way" (i.e., "die Lebensführung im Gehorsam gegen die in der Gemeinde gelehrt Auslegung des Gesetzes"—E. Lohse, *Die Texte aus Qumran* (Darmstadt, 1964), 281, n. 74) is associated with both "truth" and "life"; e.g., CD 3,15f; 1QH 15,22f; 1QS 9,16f.

and "life" is common in the OT and Judaism. It is therefore not surprising to find the Torah designated as the "way", "truth" and "life" in the Rabbinical writings, even though there is no text in which all three are used together.<sup>280</sup> Since Jn shows elsewhere that Jesus, not the Torah, is the "truth" and the "life"<sup>281</sup> and since he is obviously interested in transferring other symbols for the Law to Jesus<sup>282</sup> in order to show that no one can come (go) to the Father except in and through Jesus (14,6; comp. vv. 8-10; 5,40; 6,37.44.66, etc.), it would seem that he is deriving the term *ὁδός* not from Gnosticism, but from the Jewish tradition.<sup>283</sup> As for the related terms *τόπος*, *ὅπου*, some scholars<sup>284</sup> hold that they can be explained in the light of Dt 1,29-33 and Exodus typology, which is very much present in Jn.

When examining the meaning *μαρτυρεῖν* has in Jn, we saw that it is a term of revelation and is practically synonymous with *λαλεῖν*. This is the key to the understanding of Jn 8,14. Jesus comes from the Father as the one who was with the Father from the beginning; his "exaltation" is a return to the Father with whom he was before the foundation of the world. All this expresses the fact that Jesus is the Son of God and, as such, the Revealer. It is likewise in virtue of his divine origin (and destiny) that the *μαρτυρία* Jesus bears to himself is *ἀληθής*. Jesus alone, besides the Father, has complete knowledge of his own person (and of the Father). In view of this knowledge, he is qualified to bear witness to himself since his "testimony" concerns his very person, his identity and his relationship to the Father.

Because the self-revelation of Jesus is here viewed as "testimony", Jn has Jesus speak as if he were relying on the knowledge he has of his origin and destiny to indicate the knowledge he has of his own person (and of the Father). In the "juridical" context,<sup>285</sup> in which Jesus appears as a "witness", it is natural that he should speak of

<sup>280</sup> Cf. *Str.-Bill.*, I, 460-464; IV, 1080; II, 361; III, 129-132. Also Michaelis, *TWNT* V, 85, 37ff.

<sup>281</sup> Jn 5,39; 1,17. See above, p. 228; below, pp. 452f; 537f.

<sup>282</sup> See below, pp. 452-487.

<sup>283</sup> It should be noted that the "way" in some Jewish texts is taken in a figurative sense which is very close to that of Jn; see the texts quoted by *Str.-Bill.*, I, 463f, 2. and 3.; comp. 1QS 8,13-15 and 9,17-20; see also de la Potterie, *art. cit.*, 919ff.

<sup>284</sup> Cf. M.-E. Boismard, "L'évolution du thème eschatologique dans les traditions johanniques", *RB* 68 (1961) 507-524, 520ff. Boismard follows A. Guiling and is followed by de la Potterie (*art. cit.*, 915).

<sup>285</sup> See what has been said about *μαρτυρεῖν* as a juridical term (above, pp. 206ff.) and what is said below.

"knowing" that to which he bears witness (viz., his "origin" and "destiny" as expressing the mystery of his person). In reality it is not the "knowledge" he has of himself which is the object or basis of his *μαρτυρία*—revelation: Jesus *is* the revelation he brings and to which he bears witness. Once again Jn was forced to dissociate what is inseparable. Jesus is not a witness in the ordinary sense of the term, nor is his *μαρτυρία* one which can be judged valid outside of faith.

Only the disciples have come to know, to believe, that Jesus has come from the Father (17,8) and that the Father sent him (ibid.). Only they, by receiving the "word" (ibid.) have penetrated the mystery of Christ's person. To know that the Father has sent Jesus (ibid.) is to believe that he sent him (17,25). It is also to believe in Christ as the Son of God. Jesus' prayer can therefore be that the world come to know that he was sent by the Father (his origin) instead of that it come to believe that he is the Christ, the Son of God (20,31). The lack of knowledge of the Jews with regard to Jesus' origin and destiny at 8,14 is there to indicate their lack of knowledge with regard to his person (Wesen). Had they this knowledge (which is the fruit of faith in Christ) they would perceive that, being the only-begotten Son, Jesus alone is in a position to testify concerning himself (= to reveal himself) and would accept his testimony as truthful. The *κρίνειν* of the Pharisees (= the rejection of Jesus' *μαρτυρία*) is vitiated at the root.

### C) *The κρίνειν of the Pharisees—v. 15a*

We have already pointed out that vv. 14c-16a are somewhat intrusive. On the other hand, in considering the meaning of *μαρτυρεῖν* in Jn, the two terms *μαρτυρεῖν* and *κρίνειν* appeared closely related. *Μαρτυρεῖν* and *κρίνειν* are used in conjunction with each other <sup>286</sup> not only at 8,12-20 but also in 5,30-31. Whatever the reason which led to the introduction of the *κρίσις*-theme in vv. 14c-16a, we should not treat it as a foreign body, but rather try to understand what led the evangelist to pass (somewhat abruptly) from the idea of *μαρτυρεῖν* to that of *κρίνειν*.

In Jn 8,12-20, according to Charlier, we would be dealing with

<sup>286</sup> The relation is also present at Jn 3,31-36 (comp. 3,16ff!), although the term *κρίνειν* is absent.



"une discussion privée dans laquelle ... il n'est pas question d'accusation portée ou de sentence judiciaire à prononcer".<sup>287</sup> This view does not take two facts into account: 1) The polemical character of chapters 7-9, which accentuates the "juridical" meaning *μαρτυρεῖν* and *μαρτυρία* already have in the Fourth Gospel. 2) The *κρίσις*-theme, which is current in these chapters.

1) We have seen how, throughout the Gospel, the Jews (the "world") sit in judgement over Jesus and demand that he submit to their *κρίσις*. The Pharisees have a special role to play. In Jn 7 it is they who, with the High Priests, send out officers to arrest Jesus (7,32); it is they who claim that not one of their number has been "led astray" by (believed on) Jesus (7,48). The chapter closes with the words of Nicodemus, one of their number: "Does our Law condemn (*κρίνειν*) a man without ...?" (7,51) and with the answer of the Pharisees, which shows that Jesus already stands condemned in their eyes. The strife between Jesus and the Pharisees finds its immediate continuation in Jn 8 (in Jn 7 Jesus discussed with the Jews, while the Pharisees acted behind the scenes). They are the interlocutors of Jesus in 8,12-20, although the Jews replace them at v. 22. The same Pharisees with whom Jesus is here discussing will dominate the scene in Jn 9 and hold a regular judicial "hearing" in an attempt to convict Jesus; they will themselves stand condemned as a result of the judgement they pronounce against Jesus (9,39-41). It is again the Pharisees who, at 11,47ff, decree the death of Jesus. Jn 8,12-20 can therefore hardly be considered a "private discussion". The "trial" of Jesus (which is, in reality, the "trial" of the Jews and of the world) begins with the Prologue and not with his arrest.

2) The *κρίσις*-theme appears at 7,24, at 7,52 (which, if we accept the present order of the Gospel, immediately precedes 8,12ff) and at 8,15.16.26.46.50. The whole of Jn 9 is under the sign of *κρίσις*.

Loisy holds that the judgement of the Pharisees is one of mere "evaluation".<sup>288</sup> In view of what has just been said, we cannot agree with him any more than we can with Charlier. What is important in the immediate context of 8,14f is the relationship between *μαρτυρεῖν* and *κρίνειν*. Jesus has spoken and revealed (*ἐλάλησεν*) that he is the "light of the world". This self-revelation is called a *μαρτυρία* by the Pharisees. We have tried to show that *μαρτυρεῖν* stresses the

<sup>287</sup> *Art. cit.*, 507.

<sup>288</sup> *Comm.*, 554.

"juridical" aspect of Jesus' self-revelation, taking place, as it does, before a hostile world.<sup>289</sup> We are dealing with more than a mere "evaluation" (Loisy) and with more than a "condemnation morale" (Lagrange), even though a moral condemnation is implied. *The Pharisees are passing a formal judgement upon the person of Jesus. In rejecting his μαρτυρία, they are rejecting his self-revelation (for μαρτυρεῖν is an equivalent term for λαλεῖν), they are judging him κατὰ τὴν σάρκα.*

The article is important. In both the NT and non-canonical literature the expression we find is always κατὰ σάρκα (with the only possible exception of 2 Cor 11,8). In view of the article, Charlier<sup>290</sup> holds that we cannot translate as at 7,24: "according to what meets the eye, according to appearances", but should rather adopt the interpretation of Barrett: "the Jews judge him on the basis of what they see—his flesh".<sup>291</sup> However, κατὰ τὴν σάρκα κρίνειν is possibly not so far removed from κρίνειν κατὰ σάρκα and κρίνειν κατ' ὄψιν as Charlier would have it. When one considers that, for Jn, the σάρξ of Jesus is precisely what meets the eye, while his δόξα is something which is perceived only by faith, the opposition becomes more apparent than real. To judge κατ' ὄψιν is to judge without possessing the spiritual "insight" which is necessary in order to pronounce a "just" judgement.<sup>292</sup> It is because the Pharisees lack this "insight" (which comes from faith) that they cannot penetrate beyond the σάρξ of Jesus to discover his divine Sonship. If they could, they would accept the fact that he alone is qualified to bear witness to himself and that the witness he bears must be truthful in virtue of the knowledge he and he alone has of his person (and of the Father). Instead they "judge" him κατὰ τὴν σάρκα and their judgement is consequently one of condemnation—apparent condemnation of Jesus (rejection of his μαρτυρία), true condemnation of themselves. This is explained in vv. 15b-16.

#### D) *The κρίνειν of Jesus—vv. 15b-16*

Although Jesus judges (condemns) no one—for he has not come to "judge" (condemn) but to save (3,17), still his μαρτυρία brings about

<sup>289</sup> See above, pp. 206f.

<sup>290</sup> *Art. cit.*, 512f.

<sup>291</sup> *Comm.*, 279.

<sup>292</sup> See what has been said on Jn 7,24, pp. 166ff; see also pp. 146-157.

a *κρίσις*, a separation between those who accept it and those who do not, with the resulting condemnation of the latter. This *κρίσις* is "truthful" because Jesus is the revelation of the Father and cannot but produce a separation between those who love him and hear the "truth" and those who do not (8,40ff; comp. 3,19-21). The negative judgement the Pharisees make in regard to Jesus (i.e., his testimony is not "truthful") prompts Jesus to return to the question of his *μαρτυρία*.

E) *The μαρτυρία of Jesus and the Father. The Law requires that the μαρτυρία of Jesus be accepted as "truthful"—vv. 17-18*

In v. 17 Jesus has recourse to the Law to prove the validity of his testimony. The legal principle is found at Dt 19,15 (comp. Dt 17,6; Num 35,30): ἐπὶ στόματος δύο μαρτύρων ... σταθήσεται πᾶν ῥήμα.

Charlier has remarked that the principle of the two witnesses undergoes a curious transformation in our text.<sup>293</sup> Everywhere in the NT where this legal principle is referred to, we are dealing with witnesses for the prosecution (Mt 18,16; 26,60; 2 Cor 13,1; Heb 10,28). The same may be said of the texts of the OT (Dt 19,5; 17,6; Num 35,30), even though the last words of Dt 19,15 could have a broader application. This is no doubt exact. We have seen that, in Jn, *μαρτυρεῖν* has a "positive" sense. It cannot be otherwise since it is a term of revelation. However, one should not lose sight of the "juridical" context of 8,12-20. Jesus (apparently) stands as a defendant before the Pharisees; in reality he is their judge. In this setting his *λαλεῖν* takes on the value of a *μαρτυρία* which is, directly, a *μαρτυρία* in his favour (in his defence) but *indirectly* a *μαρτυρία* against those who reject it (all the more so since it is guaranteed as "truthful" by the Law!).

As at Jn 10,34-36, we seem to be in the presence of a use of the Law which is hardly valid. If the Law requires two witnesses (at least) and the witness a man bears to himself is not valid, how is the legal principle respected in the case of Jesus' testimony? It appears that, strictly speaking, Jesus would require two witnesses *besides himself*.

The question has perplexed some exegetes<sup>294</sup> and has never really received a convincing solution. Charlier, following Loisy, has proposed that Jesus, *as God*, is rendering testimony to himself. We would be

<sup>293</sup> *Art. cit.*, 507.

<sup>294</sup> For some examples of desperate attempts, cf. Charlier, *art. cit.*, 510; cf. also Lagrange, *ad loc.*, who is hard put to it to give a satisfactory explanation.

dealing with a *double* divine witness : that of the Son of God and that of the Father. The *ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ μαρτυρῶν* of v. 18 would be an *ἐγὼ εἰμι* formula through which Jesus reveals himself as the Son of God who, as God, bears witness to Jesus. John the Baptist and other witnesses are not called upon because here we are no longer dealing with the messiahship of Jesus but with the mystery of his person. To this only God (the Son of God and the Father) can testify. This would explain why Jn has substituted *μαρτύρων* to the original *ἀνθρώπων* (LXX), עֲדִיּוֹם (MT). Jn's quotations are often "free", but it is indeed strange that *ἀνθρώπων* is found rather than *μαρτύρων* at 8,17. The word *μάρτυς* would come quite naturally when quoting a legal principle concerning the number of *witnesses* required for a valid testimony.<sup>295</sup> The *δύο ἀνθρώπων* is all the more striking in that the two "witnesses" are hardly *ἄνθρωποι*. This could be true of Jesus, but hardly of the Father. Charlier concludes that Jn would be stressing that, if the testimony of two men is sufficient, a double *divine* testimony is all the more unquestionable.

There is some truth to Charlier's observations, but his interpretation is open to serious objections. To begin with, it does not give v. 14 its full force. We have seen that Jesus states that the testimony he bears to himself is *valid*, given that he alone can truly testify on his own behalf (as the Revealer).<sup>296</sup> The Law requires two witnesses. Jn (Jesus) advances that there are two witnesses : Jesus (who is qualified to be, indeed *must* be, his own witness in virtue of his unique status) and the Father.

There is, strictly speaking, only one *μαρτυρία*, but this does not mean there is only one *μαρτυρῶν*, the Father. Jn clearly distinguishes between the Father and the Son,<sup>297</sup> even though the activity of the Father is that of the Son. Inasmuch as Jesus does not act or speak of himself, his works and words are *his* and, at the same time, the works and words of *the Father*. Inasmuch as he does nothing on his own authority and seeks not his own will but the will of the Father (5,30), Jesus does not bear witness to himself in the ordinary sense of

<sup>295</sup> Jn does not use *μάρτυς*, but a hapax is frequent in quotations ; furthermore he could have used the participle.

<sup>296</sup> One can, with Bultmann (212), hold that this is a "mythologische Formulierung des Einheitsgedankens", but even Bultmann does not deny that "mythologically" Jn distinguishes between the Father and the Son.

<sup>297</sup> This is sufficient to account for the apparent divergence between this text and 5,31 ; we need not postulate two different editors (Brown, 224).

the expression (5,31) but in unity with the Father. His *μαρτυρία* is therefore not only truthful, it is his *μαρτυρία* and the *μαρτυρία* of the Father. *There is one μαρτυρία but there are two μαρτυροῦντες, two persons who testify to the truthfulness of what Jesus says : Jesus and the Father.*

We are not in the presence of a "Wort des Hohnes" (Bultmann). If we wish to speak of Johannine irony (which is something quite different), it is not in the sense indicated by Bultmann.<sup>298</sup> Charlier is right in saying that one hardly quotes a legal precept with the intention of showing that its prescriptions are *not* fulfilled. The irony is not that the "beiden Zeugen Einer sind" but that we are in the presence of a valid juridical argument which does not have any validity at all (cannot have any validity at all) for the Pharisees. Only faith can perceive the way in which the Law is fulfilled in the testimony of the Father and the Son.

Jn is using an argument *a minori ad maius*. If the testimony of two men is valid, what are we to say of the testimony of the Father and the Son? It is in this sense that the substitution of *ἀνθρώπων* to *μαρτύρων* is to be explained. Neither the Father nor Jesus are "men". The Father is God and Jesus is certainly more than "man". Jesus appears to be nothing more than an ordinary man to the Pharisees, for the evangelist and his readers he is much more than that (he is the Son of God, God).

We do not wish to suggest, with Charlier, that Jesus "en sa qualité de Fils de Dieu" is a divine witness to himself. A distinction between Jesus and Jesus as "Son of God" is foreign to Jn's thought. Such an affirmation as : "... il faut, au Ciel, deux temoins, *indépendamment de Jésus*"<sup>299</sup> (I underline) cannot be taken seriously. It is to have Jn make distinctions he never made. Nor is it certain that the *ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ μαρτυρῶν* (8,18) is an *ἐγὼ εἰμι* formula which presents Christ as God.<sup>300</sup> Charlier maintains that Jn could have written *ἐγὼ μαρτυρῶ*,

<sup>298</sup> Comm., 212 : "Der Satz ist keine eigentliche Argumentation, sondern ein Wort des Hohnes : eurem Gesetz ist genügt ... denn hier bilden die zwei Zeugnisse wirklich eine Einheit, weil die beiden Zeugen Einer sind ! Die Persiflage der Gesetzlichkeit ist also zum Auessersten getrieben". Schottroff (*op. cit.*, 256) goes even further and speaks of a "Perversion" which is used by Jn to show the inadequacy of the "innerweltliche Wirklichkeit" as opposed to the "himmlische Wirklichkeit".

<sup>299</sup> *Art. cit.*, 511 ; cf. further 514.

<sup>300</sup> Charlier holds this (*art. cit.*, 513f) and takes it as proof that Jesus is testifying to himself "en sa qualité de Fils de Dieu".

had he not wished to use an ἐγώ εἰμι formula. He has unfortunately overlooked the fact that, in two other cases, Jn prefers the periphrastic construction to the present indicative of μαρτυρεῖν (cf. 5,32.39—the participle also has the article in these cases!) and that Jn uses the present participle with the article quite regularly.<sup>301</sup> There is a further difficulty, this time one of context. The discussion in vv. 13-20 revolves around the ἐγώ εἰμι formula used at v. 12; it is somewhat strained to have Jn use a formula of revelation (ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ μαρτυρῶν) in a dialogue in which a formula of revelation (ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου) is already being contested and the validity of Jesus' self-witnessing the point being discussed.

As objectionable as the hypothesis of Charlier may seem, it can be used in a novel manner which casts new light on Jn 8,12-20 and which we propose as a possibility. If the Johannine perspective is that proposed by Loisy and re-proposed with greater balance and plausibility by Cullmann, if the Fourth Gospel views the life of Christ in the light of the life of the community he founded, Jn 8,12ff is susceptible of receiving an interpretation which comes as a complement to that already proposed and makes it even more plausible.

In the controversy of the Church with the Synagogue, Jn claims that two witnesses testify to who Jesus really was (is): the Father and the Son (the Exalted Lord). The revelation of Jesus is seen in its "heilsgeschichtlichen Verknüpfung und Entfaltung". In this perspective we could speak of two divine persons (although Jn would not use such terms) rendering testimony to what Jesus was during his earthly ministry and to what he remains: the Father and the Son. This testimony is inseparable from that rendered by Jesus during his life and ministry, but it is now viewed in the light of his resurrection. The "historical" perspective is, however, retained by Jn, who speaks of the "witness" of the Spirit and the disciples as something which belongs to the future. This hypothesis receives a certain confirmation from the use made of the same legal precept found at 8,17 in 1 Jn 5,6-9, although the perspective of the Epistle is different.<sup>302</sup>

<sup>301</sup> E.g., 6,35.37.64.

<sup>302</sup> In 1 Jn the *Father bore witness* and the *Spirit bears witness*. This is not the perspective of the Gospel where the *Father bore and bears witness*, *Jesus bears witness* and the *Spirit will bear witness*.

F) *The Jews know neither Jesus nor the Father; if they knew Jesus, they would know the Father—v. 19*

The force of Jesus' reasoning is evident only to the eyes of faith. This is brought out clearly in v. 19. Jesus has just said that he is the first witness and that the second witness is the Father. The question of the Pharisees manifests their incapability of evaluating the statement as they should. They know neither Jesus nor the Father, consequently neither he nor the Father can be recognized as "witnesses". There are two *μαρτυροῦντες*: Jesus and the Father. In order to accept this, the Pharisees would have to "know" Jesus and the Father (in him). Their knowledge of Jesus and the Father would allow them to understand that, if the witness of two *men* is *ἀληθής*, the testimony of the Revealer and of the Father in him is *ἀληθής* in an eminent degree.

This brings us to the relationship which exists between the *μαρτυρία* Jesus (and the Father in him) bears to himself and the *μαρτυρία* borne to Jesus by the Father through the Baptist, the *ἔργα*, OT revelation and the Scriptures. Jn 5,31-39 presents these as "testifying" to Jesus, yet only one *person* is cited as witness besides the Father (who is behind all the witnesses and testifies directly at Sinai—5,37): John the Baptist.

Why does Jn not appeal to the witness of the Baptist at 8,12ff, as the *δυο ἄνθρώπων* should have invited him to do? The answer is already contained in what has been seen so far. It is not a question of the Baptist only being qualified to bear witness to Jesus as the Messiah (vs. Charlier). John testifies to Jesus as the Messiah, as the "light" (1,7-8), as the Pre-existent (1,15), as the *μονογενὴς θεός* (1,18), as the Lamb of God (1,29), as the Son of God (1,34). His testimony is referred to by Jesus at 5,33ff, a section which is inseparable from 5,1-29, in which Jesus has "made himself equal to God". It has the same object as that of Jesus and the Father. If Jn does not refer to the *μαρτυρία* of the Baptist at 8,12-20, the reason lies elsewhere. The Baptist's testimony certainly had a role to play in the "Heilsökonomie" and Jn took care (perhaps even for polemical reasons) to show that the Baptist's whole activity was limited to bearing witness to one greater than he. Ultimately, however, his testimony has relative value. It is that of a "man" <sup>303</sup> and no man is truly qualified to bear witness to Jesus, not even the Baptist.

<sup>303</sup> John testifies to what has been revealed to him by the Father (1,33). He twice

There is another point which deserves attention. At Jn 5,31-39 the one "witness" to Jesus which could not be contested by the Jews as an actual *μαρτυρία* to Christ (that of the Baptist) is considered by Jn to be of less value than the "testimony" of the *ἔργα*, OT revelation and the Scriptures. But the astonishing fact is that *the ἔργα, OT revelation and the Scriptures become "witnesses" to Jesus only for those who are willing to believe in him.* The Jews recognized both that Jesus had worked "signs" (miracles) and that God had revealed himself on Sinai and in the Scriptures, but they were hardly prepared to recognize these realities as "witnesses" to Jesus; to the Jews they hardly had the value the *μαρτυρία* of the Baptist would have had. That Jn should give greater importance precisely to the "testimonies" which could not possibly be accepted as such by the Jews is a clear indication that he is presenting evidence which is of real value only to believers. The stage is thus set for 8,12ff.

For Christians, the only testimony which is of *ultimate* value (notwithstanding the validity of other "testimonies") is that of the Father and the Son (in the perspective of 1 Jn: of the Spirit and, in the past, of the Father); there is, ultimately, no other testimony besides this, neither that of the Baptist, nor of the *ἔργα*, nor of OT revelation, nor of the Scriptures—for all these become such in virtue of the testimony the Father bore to Jesus in the very testimony Jesus bore to himself. To the extent in which this *μαρτυρία* surpasses all others it becomes all the less intelligible to the Jews. Yet, as the supreme "testimony" of the Father and the Son, prepared for by all previous "testimonies", it should have been accepted by the Jews—the very Law demands that the witness of two men be accepted!

As at 10,34-36 we may ask: Is the reasoning of Jesus valid? The answer is once again: Beyond the shadow of a doubt ... for a Jewish Christian! For an unbelieving Jew it would carry no conviction. The requirements of the Law have been fulfilled by being surpassed!

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repeats that it is only as a result of what he saw that he can bear witness to Christ (1,33.34). The testimony of the Baptist is based upon that of the Father and is traced back to its source. John's testimony is mentioned at 5,33ff, but not without qualification and great reserve: *ἐγὼ δὲ οὐ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου τὴν μαρτυρίαν λαμβάνω, ἀλλὰ ταῦτα λέγω ἵνα ὑμεῖς σωθῇτε* (5,34).



4. THE OT PROPHECY : "ALL SHALL BE TAUGHT BY GOD" IS FULFILLED IN THE PERSON OF JESUS (IN HIS TEACHING)—Jn 6,45

Jn 6,45 has been touched upon in Part One, when we spoke about the contrast (and continuity) established in the Fourth Gospel between the teaching of Jesus and the Torah. It is one of the most important verses for understanding the Johannine symbolism contained in chapter 6,<sup>304</sup> because it contains an explicit reference to "teaching" and "learning". But its main interest is that Jesus quotes an OT prophecy which said : "All *will be* taught by God" and sees the prophecy realized in the case of all who have heard and learned from the Father *and come to him* (Jesus).

Although this is not evident at first sight, *Jesus is again appealing to the OT (Torah) in defence of his teaching*. The text quoted by Jn (καὶ ἔσονται πάντες διδασκοὶ θεοῦ) belongs to a group of OT texts which affirm that in the last days men would be taught directly by God.<sup>305</sup> In a sense this was to be a return to the beginnings. It was only from the time of the Great Synagogue that the teaching of the Law had become an all-important function within the Jewish community and that the Soferim took their place alongside the priests as a "class" or "institution" in its own right.<sup>306</sup> The office of "teacher" (and the institutions, customs and practices which accompanied it) was therefore a relatively late development, unknown to ancient Israel.<sup>307</sup> It was above all Isaiah and Jeremiah who prophesied that a time would come in which God himself would "teach" the sons of Israel. This affirmation is always made in a context which is unmistakably eschatological. In the Wisdom current, "Wisdom" assumes the role of "teacher" and calls men to become her disciples.<sup>308</sup> The context is also eschatological, although the perspective is rather one of "realized" eschatology.<sup>309</sup> We must add

<sup>304</sup> We will return upon this verse when we consider the meaning of the "bread of life", cf. Part Four, pp. 455; 471f.

<sup>305</sup> Is 2,2-4; 54,13 (comp. 55,1-3); Jer 31,31-34 (comp. 24,7); Mic 4,2.

<sup>306</sup> See what has been said above, pp. 77f; 106f.

<sup>307</sup> Sir 28,19-26 is the first witness to this new development. He himself was a "teacher", a Sofer. Cf. Moore, *Judaism*, I, 37-47.

<sup>308</sup> Prov 1,20-23; 8-9; Wisd 6; Sir 24. This last text is particularly important. Here "Wisdom" is identified with the Law and the "sage" who instructs (24,32-34), instructs in the "wisdom" which is the Law.

<sup>309</sup> On the idea of realized eschatology in Wisd, cf. G. Ziener, "Weisheitsbuch und Johannevangelium", *Bib* 39 (1958) 37-60, 38-49.

that both Is 54,13 (which Jn is quoting)<sup>310</sup> and similar texts (Jer 31, 33f; Mic 4,2) had been expounded repeatedly in the Rabbinical traditions.<sup>311</sup> The text quoted by Jn would consequently be readily recognized by the Jews (Pharisees) and its implications seized. For us the quotation comes abruptly and the OT text becomes meaningful only if it and the paraphrase-explanation added by Jn are viewed as part of the organic whole to which they belong.

At 6,45 we already have, in embryo, what is more fully developed at 7,14ff: the question of Jesus' "teaching". The Pharisees believe they are the disciples of Moses (Jn 9,28). They hand on the only legitimate, authorized teaching: that which has been transmitted through an unbroken chain of "rabbis" (and "disciples") and which goes back to Moses and to God himself (9,29).<sup>312</sup> Jesus has no place within this body of authoritative Jewish tradition. Taking this as his starting point (which is, of course, not openly stated), Jesus (Jn) recalls that the OT had spoken of men being taught directly by God in the last days.<sup>313</sup>

By applying this text to Jesus Jn introduces two daring innovations :

A) *The teaching God was to give "directly" in the last days is given by (in) Jesus.* At first sight, Jn 6,45 would seem to imply some "direct" teaching by God or, at least, a "being taught" by God which is, in some way, distinct from being taught by Jesus. The *ἀκούσας* and *μαθὼν*<sup>314</sup> seem to be anterior to the *ἔρχεται πρὸς ἐμέ*. Even if they are taken as "inceptive" aorists, the "having heard and learned" are seen as "punctual" acts which already took place and the result of which is the "coming" to the Son.<sup>315</sup> In view of

<sup>310</sup> Jn's quotation differs slightly from both the LXX and MT, but there is no doubt that it is Is 54,13 which is being quoted, most probably according to the LXX.

<sup>311</sup> See below, nn. 323 and 324.

<sup>312</sup> Cf. E. Birkemann, "La chaîne de la tradition pharisienne", *RB* 33 (1952) 44-54.

<sup>313</sup> It is interesting to note, in view of Jn's presentation of Jesus as a "teacher" (7,14ff; 6,45, etc.) who is himself "taught" by God (7,14ff and 8,28), that the Servant in Is 42,1-4 and 50,4 is presented in exactly these terms: a "teacher" who "hears as those who are taught" morning by morning from God (Is 50,4). What the Servant teaches is the Law (Is 42,4).

<sup>314</sup> There seems to be no reason to press the distinction between *ἀκούσας* and *μαθὼν* and to hold that *μαθὼν* adds the connotation of "true" hearing (Bultmann, 172, n. 5) or that it entails a "voluntary act", as opposed to *ἀκούσας* (Bernard).

<sup>315</sup> Even Westcott, who translates: "Every one that heareth from the Father and

Jn 6,44, which speaks of the Father "drawing" men to Jesus, one would be tempted to posit some sort of "anterior" teaching one receives from the Father *before* coming to Christ. No commentary, to our knowledge, postulates such an "anterior" teaching of the Father, but a couple lean towards an "interior" teaching of the Father.<sup>316</sup> When one so interprets, one is immediately forced (by v. 46) to specify that it is not a direct experience of God.<sup>317</sup> Most exegetes, therefore, avoid distinguishing between an "external" instruction given by Jesus and an "interior" illumination (or instruction) given by the Father.<sup>318</sup>

The best explanation<sup>319</sup> is that we are dealing with an "intentional tautological paradox".<sup>320</sup> What v. 45 expresses is not that one hears from the Father and learns (i.e., is taught by God) and *then* comes to Jesus, but that one hears and learns from the Father (is taught by God) *by coming* to Jesus. Odeberg has expressed it in these words: "No one can come to the Son, without having received the teaching from the Father; no one can hear and learn from the Father except through the Son".<sup>321</sup> Expressed in terms which are closer to the text: hearing and learning from the Father comes about in the very act of coming to Jesus; coming to Jesus comes about in the very act of hearing and learning from the Father. The "attraction" the Father exerts (v. 44) is the revelation of the Father in the Son. God is said to teach men directly because the teaching of Jesus is the very teaching of God. Jesus and the Father are "one", their teaching is "one"; to hear and learn from Jesus is to hear and learn from

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learneth ..." must concede that "the 'hearing' and 'learning' are presented as single events corresponding to a definite voice and revelation ... the call is obeyed at once ... the fact of the revelation is grasped at once" (ad 6,45).

<sup>316</sup> Barrett (ad loc.): "The inward teaching which God gives"; Lagrange (ad loc.): "Tous seront enseignés par Dieu, c'est-à-dire à l'intérieure et par conséquent attirés par lui".

<sup>317</sup> Barrett (ad 6,46): "The previous verse might be misleading. It must not be taken to mean that any man may enjoy a direct mystical experience (sic!) of God and then, enlightened, attach himself to Jesus".

<sup>318</sup> Thus Loisy (451) distinguishes and unites at the same time: "L'instruction divine ... vient du dehors, et elle est aussi une illumination intérieure; l'attrait du Père est, au point de vue réel, la révélation du Père par le Fils".

<sup>319</sup> It is proposed, notably, by Odeberg (257f) and Bultmann (172).

<sup>320</sup> The expression is that of Odeberg (257); Bultmann also speaks of "eine Paradoxie" (172).

<sup>321</sup> *Op. cit.*, 257f.

the Father, to accept his teaching is to be taught directly by God. What is a scandal to the Jews is self-evident to faith.

There is another avenue of approach which, so far as we could see, is proposed by no commentary but for which much can be said. In view of the parallelism with 5,37f, we suggest that Jn may be thinking of OT revelation as a pedagogical tool used by God to "teach" and to lead to Christ. At 5,37f Jn had stated that the Jews had proven deaf to the word God had addressed to them since they do not receive the one whom he sent. This implies that those who do receive Jesus show that they have heard God and have his "word" (OT revelation) abiding in them. The reasoning at 6,45 would be similar. He who has heard and learned from the Father (the reference is to the "direct" revelation given by the Father to Moses and in the OT (Torah)—cf. 5,37)<sup>322</sup> comes to Jesus. This interpretation has the advantage of taking the *ὁ ἀκούσας παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς* at its face value: the OT was direct revelation of the Father and was not given through Jesus (but see what is said below).

An objection against such an interpretation would be that the emphasis is misplaced. Jn is quoting the prophecy of Isaiah which speaks of "being taught by God" *in the last days*. The teaching given by God before Christ's coming can hardly be what is meant. We believe this is not a valid argument. Jn is saying that Jesus gives the final, definitive teaching—a teaching which does not come down from Moses through Rabbinical schools, but *directly* from God. In Jesus God himself teaches his people, as he had done on Sinai. But, on the other hand, to accept Christ (and his teaching, which is that of the Father) means to have heard and learned from the Father, to understand what the Father had said in OT revelation. We could reformulate the paradox mentioned above in these terms (the paradox holds good even for the present interpretation): by coming to Jesus the teaching of the Father given in the Torah is grasped and assimilated; by grasping and assimilating the teaching the Father gave in the Torah, one comes to Jesus. This is what Isaiah was referring to and which is made possible in "the last days". We wish to emphasize that this does *not* mean that Jesus is presented by Jn as an "interpreter of the Law" or that he brings a "new Law". It rather shows that the Law, for Jn, has prophetic value, so that it

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<sup>322</sup> See above, pp. 216ff.

can be understood only in the light of Christ's person and mission. This leads us to the second point.

B) The "teaching" given by God (the Messiah) in the last days no longer has the Law as its object (*viz.*, is not a "new" Law). Jer 31,33f speaks of the covenant of the last days in these terms: "... I will put my Law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts ... And no longer shall each man teach his neighbour and each his brother ... for they shall all know me". Mic 4,2, also writing about the last days, speaks of all the nations coming to the mountain of the Lord (Sion) "that he may teach" them "his ways ... for out of Sion shall go forth the Law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem".

In the Rabbinical texts we find Is 54,13 (which Jn quotes) and Jer 31,33f often combined and interpreted in the sense that, in the last days, God himself would teach his people the Torah.<sup>323</sup> The texts are so numerous that one can assume this was a common Rabbinic doctrine.<sup>324</sup> It takes on two forms. Some texts speak of God teaching the Torah in the messianic period,<sup>325</sup> others of God teaching the Torah in "the world to come".<sup>326</sup> There is another early tradition (which goes hand in hand with the former doctrine) according to which *the Messiah* was to be a teacher (or interpreter) of the Torah. Numerous Rabbinical texts bear witness to this expectation also,<sup>327</sup> and it may be found even in pre-Christian apocryphal literature.<sup>328</sup> Some texts even speak of the Messiah bringing a "new" Torah,<sup>329</sup> but this probably means a "new interpretation" of the Law.<sup>330</sup> It

<sup>323</sup> Cf. *Str.-Bill.*, III, 634 (ad 1 Thess 4,9); 704 (ad Heb 8,8-12) and esp. IV, 919  $\mu$  and 1153 m.

<sup>324</sup> "Dass Gott selbst dereinst sein Volk die Tora lehren werde, war auf Grund von Jes 54,13 u. ähnlichen Stellen allgemein verbreitete Annahme". *Str.-Bill.*, II, 484.

<sup>325</sup> *Str.-Bill.*, IV, 919  $\mu$ .

<sup>326</sup> *Id.*, IV, 1153 m.

<sup>327</sup> The most important texts are Gen R 98 (62<sup>a</sup>); Targ Is 53,5.11f; Targ Ps 45,10f; Midr Ps 2, § 9 (14<sup>b</sup>); Targ HL 8,1f; Midr Ps 110, § 4 (233<sup>b</sup>). All quoted by *Str.-Bill.*, IV, 1 a.

<sup>328</sup> *Str.-Bill.*, IV, 2 b, quotes eth Hen 49,1-3; 51,3; Ps Sol 17,35.43. Cf. also what is said below about Qumran.

<sup>329</sup> Cf. *Str.-Bill.*, IV, 2 c and d. The Torah is called *תורתו של משיח* in Midr Ecol 11,8 (52<sup>a</sup>)—cf. *ὁ νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ* in Gal 6,2. Matthew presents Jesus as the giver of the New Law.

<sup>330</sup> Billerbeck (*op. cit.*, IV, 1) holds that we are dealing with a new *interpretation* of the Law rather than with a new Law: "Nein, die neue Tora des Messias wird die

thus appears certain that, within Judaism, there was a current which expected the Messiah to be a "teacher" or "interpreter" of the Law.

The Qumran texts dispel any doubt which may remain. They testify to the existence of this view in the NT period. In CD <sup>331</sup> the Messiah of Aaron is the High Priest who is to promulgate the "new Law" and reveal the meaning of the Scriptures. He is called the "Interpreter of the Law".<sup>332</sup> It is noteworthy that, whereas in IQS and contemporary texts the more important functions of the Priestly Messiah are cultic, his function as interpreter of the Law is given more importance in the period which lies between the Damascus Document (the oldest manuscripts of which go back to 75-50 B.C.) and the commentaries on the biblical books (1st century A.D.).<sup>333</sup>

In view of a tradition which is so strongly attested to and which goes back to the NT period, it is almost certain that, for Jn's contemporaries, the words *ἔσονται πάντες διδασκοὶ θεοῦ* would evoke the new interpretation of the Law (or the new Law) the Messiah was to bring—or/and the teaching of the Torah God was to undertake personally in the last days.<sup>334</sup> If such is the case, Jn introduces a radical innovation not only by having God teach "directly" in Jesus but also by having Jesus teach the "truth" and not a new inter-

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alte Tora Moses sein; aber der Messias wird die alte Tora in neuer Weise auslegen". In the same sense: W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (London, 1955), 72. Qumran speaks in favour of this view. J. Klausner (*From Jesus to Paul* (New York, 1943), 496) gives references in support of the opinion that the Law would be abrogated in the last days. We may well ask, with Glasson (*Moses*, 93), whether a text such as Dt R 8,6 does not represent an anti-Christian polemic. We have mentioned how the tendency to view Jesus' doctrine as a "new Law" already began to set in in the NT period. Cf. Rengstorff, *TWNT* II, 150, 20ff.

<sup>331</sup> CD 6,7; 7,18ff. See also 4Q Fl 1,11.

<sup>332</sup> J. T. Milik was the first (*VD* 29 (1951) 152) to hold the theory of the two "Messias" and that the Priestly Messiah (Messiah of Aaron) is the Interpreter of the Law. His position is today generally accepted. Cf. A. S. Van der Woude, *Die messianischen Vorstellungen der Gemeinde von Qumran* (Assen, 1957), 66; 88.

<sup>333</sup> On this: J. T. Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judea* (London, 1963), 126f.

<sup>334</sup> Concerning the *ἐλάττω* at 6,44, Barrett (followed by Brown, *ad loc.*) has suggested that "It may be relevant to compare the use of the Piel of קרב ... for the conversion of Proselytes". He quotes Abot 1,12 where "to convert" is "to bring close to the Law". Schlatter quotes Mek Ex 18,8: Moses tells Jethro all למשכו ולקרבו לתורה. If the Law was present to Jn as he was writing vv. 44ff, the analogy may not be fortuitous. The evidence, however, is too weak to allow any certainty.

pretation of the Law (or a new Law). The teaching of the last days is the "revelation" of the Father in and through the Son.

If our interpretation of Jn 6,45 has not missed the mark, Jn is once again saying that the divine origin of Jesus and his teaching is vindicated by the Law. Being the fulfilment of what was foretold by the prophets, the teaching-revelation of Jesus should be accepted as the "eschatological" teaching given directly by God to all men. The Torah no longer mediates the "knowledge" of God. It is by coming to Jesus (= to have heard and learned from the Father) that all are taught by God. The value of OT revelation is not denied, it is possibly even alluded to in the words "to have heard and learned from the Father", but the Torah itself is grasped as "teaching of God" only in the very act of coming to Jesus—of accepting the teaching which brings to perfection and surpasses the teaching of the Law.<sup>335</sup>

Whether there is an allusion to the teaching of the Father given before the coming of Jesus or not, one thing is certain: by presenting the teaching of Jesus as the fulfilment of OT prophecy, Jn is affirming that the Jews are inexcusable when they reject such teaching as contrary to the Law. The OT itself had predicted that in the last days all would be taught by God. Jesus came from the Father to give men this final teaching. It is for this very reason that he is not a "disciple" of any Rabbinical school (viz., of Moses) and that his teaching is not to be found in the Torah (although the Torah prophesied that such a "teacher" would come).

The reasoning would hardly appear convincing to a Jew—one would first have to demonstrate that the teaching of Jesus is authentic divine revelation, but for a Christian (a Jewish-Christian) it is conclusive.

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<sup>335</sup> See what is said on the contrast between the teaching of Jesus (the bread of life) and that of Moses (the manna) in Part Four, pp. 459ff.

## CHAPTER NINE

### THE "TRUE ISRAELITE" ACKNOWLEDGES JESUS AS THE ONE ABOUT WHOM MOSES WROTE IN THE LAW AND "CONFESSES" HIM AS THE SON OF GOD, THE KING OF ISRAEL—JN 1,45-49

In discussing<sup>1</sup> the *ὁμολογία* formula which lies behind certain Johannine texts and the *Sitz im Leben* of the same, we came to the conclusion that the Fourth Gospel presents Jewish-Christians as being "cast out" of the Jewish fold by official Judaism on the grounds that they have betrayed the Torah and Moses by "confessing" Jesus. On the other hand, we sought to show<sup>2</sup> that the confession of Christ, while provoking the enmity of the Jews, is not opposed to OT revelation, the Scriptures, faith in Moses and his writings, as the Jews think. On the contrary, it is that to which these realities lead and in which they find their fulfilment and ultimate meaning.

When we considered Jn 9, the man born blind appeared to be a "type" or "figure" of the true disciple—a Jew who courageously confesses Jesus as the Messiah and, as a result, becomes *ἀποσυνάγωγος*.<sup>3</sup> Yet, the "disciples of Moses", and not the "disciple of Jesus", are shown to be incapable of pronouncing a "just" judgement concerning Jesus, chained down as they are by a false understanding of Jesus and the (Sabbath) Law.<sup>4</sup> We also saw<sup>5</sup> how Nicodemus, like his fellow Pharisees,<sup>6</sup> is shown to be in dire need of instruction. Although in good faith, his knowledge of the Law is incapable of disclosing to him the meaning and truth of what Jesus had to reveal. Jn thus illustrates how *supposed* ignorance of the Law (Jn 7,49; 9,34) leads to Jesus and how *presumed* knowledge of the Law militates against

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<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 239f.

<sup>2</sup> See above, Chapter Eight, *passim*; esp. pp. 254-263.

<sup>3</sup> See above, pp. 24f; 105-111; 241-253.

<sup>4</sup> See above, pp. 22; 24f; 110; 133-138; 146-157.

<sup>5</sup> See above, pp. 85-87; 115-117.

<sup>6</sup> K. Bornhäuser (*Das Johannesevangelium eine Missionschrift für Israel* (Gütersloh, 1928), 25ff) believes Nicodemus represents his colleagues, the Pharisees. This is true, provided one bears in mind that he is also presented as more enlightened and less prejudiced than they.



the acknowledgement of Jesus (Jn 7,48; 9,34.40f; 3,10). Nicodemus, notwithstanding his goodwill, does not become a disciple of Jesus. His colleagues do not even consider becoming disciples of Jesus; it would mean to betray their heritage and their "teacher" Moses (Jn 9,28f).<sup>7</sup> But the opinion of the Pharisees is not that of Jn! Our investigations have furnished evidence that belief in Jesus is not presented as a rejection of Moses or the Torah; those who are unfaithful to Moses and his writings are those who refuse to believe on the one about whom Moses wrote!

It would be wrong to imagine that, for Jn, to be a Jew and to be a Christian represent an aut-aut. True, there are two "blocks": the "Jews" vs. Jesus and his followers. It is also true that, for the Pharisees (the "Jews"), Jesus and his followers have cut themselves off from Judaism. But, once again, the opinion of the "Jews" is not that of Jn. The disciples of Jesus do not accept to be classified as apostates and enemies of their own people. On the contrary, they consider themselves "true Israelites" and the true heirs of the traditions of the Fathers.

There is a text in Jn which expresses this thought very clearly and therefore comes as a precious complement to Jn 5,37-47: Jn 1,45-49.

The text is related to 5,41-44 because we have a Jew making a "confession" of faith in Jesus; it is related to 5,37-39.45-47 because the confession of faith acclaims Jesus as the one about whom Moses wrote in the Law. As a result, Nathanael the Jew is called a "true Israelite!"

#### A) Vv. 45f

"Ὁν ἔγραψεν Μωϋσῆς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ should be compared with Jn 5, 39.46. In view of the strict correspondence between these three texts, it is evident that the presentation of Jesus by Philip as the one about whom Moses wrote means that they have found (εὐρήκαμεν) the one announced by the Scriptures, the Messiah (cf. 1,41!). Nathanael is supposed to understand the words of Philip in this sense, and he does.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to note that not one of the Pharisees, as opposed to the "leaders" (ἄρχοντες), is said to have believed on Jesus; not even Nicodemus, who was an ἄρχων, but also a Pharisee.

<sup>8</sup> The objection of Brown (ad 1,46) that "Philip has not told Nathanael that Jesus

The objection Nathanael raises (ἐκ Ναζαρέτ δύναται τι ἀγαθὸν εἶναι; v. 46) expresses the skepticism voiced at Jn 7, 41f.52 concerning Jesus' messianic claim. The objection is not so explicit at 1,46, but we believe we are not dealing merely with a manifestation of jealousy based upon the rivalry of Cana (the town of Nathanael) with the nearby Nazareth! <sup>9</sup> The context is strongly opposed to such a banal explanation. Philip has spoken of Jesus as the fulfilment of the Scriptures and Jn makes clear, at 7,41f, that one of the obstacles the Jews found in accepting Jesus as the Messiah was that the Scripture (ἡ γραφή) spoke of a Davidic Messiah, who was to be born in Bethlehem of Judah. At 7,52 the ἐραύνησον also refers to the Scriptures: they speak against Jesus being the Prophet, because he comes from Galilee.

There *may* be an allusion to a second objection the Jews raised against the messiahship of Jesus: the origin of the Messiah was to be unknown. Philip not only presents Jesus as being of Nazareth but, curiously enough, speaks of his father, Joseph. Joseph, the father of Jesus, is only mentioned here and at 6,42, where the Jews are also questioning the messianic claims of Jesus (comp. 8,19 and 7,27-29). However, this is a mere conjecture; Nathanael does not refer explicitly to the father of Jesus.

#### B) Vv. 47.49

Jesus calls Nathanael ἀληθῶς Ἰσραλῖτης. Why is Nathanael so designated and what is the meaning of this designation?

a) *Nathanael is called a "true" Israelite as a representative figure of discipleship and in virtue of his confession of faith*

Jn 1,45-49 presents Nathanael as a Jew who, notwithstanding his initial doubt, comes to Jesus. Along with the first two disciples, Nathanael is presented as the one who "came and saw" (ἐρχου καὶ ἴδε v. 46; comp. ἐρχεσθε καὶ ὁψεσθε v. 39). The important theological meaning Jn gives to "coming to Jesus" and "seeing", associated as they are with faith, cannot be overlooked. Just as Andrew and the "other" disciple "remain" with Jesus—become his disciples, so too

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was the Messiah" can be completely disregarded. Jn regularly takes for granted what he has not explicitly stated (18,33!) and, furthermore, presumed that v. 45 would be read in the light of v. 41.

<sup>9</sup> Rightly Loisy (259), Barrett (ad loc.), vs. Lagrange (ad loc.), Brown (ad loc.).

does Nathanael make an act of faith (cf. v. 50) and vv. 50f imply that from that time he remained with Jesus as his disciple.

There is a difference between Nathanael and the disciples mentioned at Jn 1,35-43. He is the only one who is presented as skeptical and doubtful (which is probably why Augustine and others made a "doctor of the Law" out of him). The passage from initial skepticism to faith stands out all the more. If we except the Baptist, who belongs in a class by himself, Nathanael is the first one in the Gospel who makes a direct and explicit confession of faith in Jesus.<sup>10</sup>

The nature of the confession is contested. The majority of authors hold that  $\delta \nu\acute{\iota}\delta\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  and  $\beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \text{'Ισραήλ}$  are both messianic titles;<sup>11</sup> others that they can be given a deeper sense.<sup>12</sup>

Brown has observed that Jn's first chapter is characterized by a theological progression "which capsulizes the disciples' gradual growth in insight throughout the ministry of Jesus"<sup>13</sup> and Bultmann has affirmed that Nathanael is a "symbolic" figure.<sup>14</sup> This last view has received confirmation from an article by De Goedt<sup>15</sup> which has shown that v. 47 contains a revelation formula: Jesus *sees* Nathanael (and says) "Behold ( $\text{ἰδὲ}$ ) a 'true' Israelite ..." The revelation formula stresses "le caractère typique de Nathanael". These observations have an immediate bearing on the meaning to be given to the "confession" of Nathanael.

Jn 1,35-51 speaks of the first disciples. The first two come to Jesus as a result of John's testimony, the purpose of which was to reveal Jesus *to Israel*. Nathanael is the last to come. It is his vocation which

<sup>10</sup> At 1,41.45 the other disciples make an implicit confession of faith, but we cannot speak of a formal  $\acute{\alpha}\mu\omicron\lambda\omicron\gamma\iota\alpha$ , nor does their acknowledgement reach the heights of the confession of Nathanael.

<sup>11</sup> Thomas; Boismard (*Du baptême à Cana* (Paris, 1956), 104); J. Jeremias ("Die Berufung des Nathanael", *Angelos* 3 (1928) 2-5, 4), who refers to Ps 2,7f; Lagrange; Lightfoot; Barrett, Bernard.

<sup>12</sup> Loisy (261); W. Bauer; Schlatter; Brown (87f—with hesitation). Bultmann (74, n. 1) distinguishes between  $\beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \text{'Ισραήλ}$  = Messiah and  $\delta \nu\acute{\iota}\delta\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ , added by the evangelist. If  $\delta \nu\acute{\iota}\delta\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  were "im Sinne der Quelle" it too would be a messianic title; for the evangelist it means more (64, n. 3).

<sup>13</sup> Comm., 88.

<sup>14</sup> Comm., 73, n. 8: "für den (Evangelisten ... ist) Nathanael eine symbolische Gestalt ..."

<sup>15</sup> M. De Goedt, "Un schème de révélation dans le quatrième évangile", *NTS* 8 (1961-62) 142-150. On Jn 1,47-51, cf. 144-145. Meeks (*op. cit.*, 82) rightly calls Nathanael, the true Israelite, "the prototype of the Christian believer".

is described in detail and which acts as a climax to the calling of the first disciples and to the whole of the first chapter. With chapter 2 the revelation of Jesus' δόξα begins. The confession of Nathanael thus opens the whole public ministry and expresses the purpose of Jesus' σημεῖα and ἔργα: to lead the disciples to faith and to the fulness of knowledge concerning Jesus (cf. 1,51 and comp. 12,37; 20,30f!). It is an anticipation of that faith which will be the outcome of Jesus' whole ἔργον.<sup>16</sup> Nathanael is the type of those who pass from unbelief to belief and his profession of faith an anticipation of the fulness of faith the disciples will achieve. This being the case, one is compelled to give νόος τοῦ θεοῦ the deeper meaning it acquires later on in the Gospel and which is in accordance with the second "title" Nathanael gives Jesus: βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. In considering the meaning Ἰσραηλίτης and Ἰσραήλ have in Jn,<sup>17</sup> we shall see that it is more than a messianic title, but we may be allowed to anticipate our conclusions and say: Nathanael confesses Jesus as the Son of God (in the strict sense) and the King of Israel, the new people of God. Both are more than messianic titles.

It is a result of *such a confession* that Nathanael is designated as a true Israelite, an Israelite worthy of the name. The fact that Jesus calls him a true Israelite before his confession of faith is irrelevant.<sup>18</sup> It is because he is a true Israelite that he "confesses" Jesus, it is because he "confesses" Jesus that he is a true Israelite.

The designation of Nathanael as a true Israelite is related to his confession of faith, but the profession of faith is itself related to v. 45. Nathanael is called a true Israelite because he recognizes Jesus *as the one about whom Moses wrote in the Law*. This aspect is important because it marks the continuity between the members of the Israel of old and the "new" Israel (see below). Because Jesus is the one

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<sup>16</sup> The objection "if Nathanael had so advanced, he would not have needed to know more" (Lagrange, ad loc., quoting Thomas), or the opinion that Nathanael "limits" the titles and will only perceive later the full meaning of what he says, are to be rejected. What is important is what the *evangelist* had in mind. The confession of faith of Nathanael is complete, it only needs to receive a better foundation.

<sup>17</sup> See below, pp. 293-302; esp. 296-301.

<sup>18</sup> We are in complete agreement with De Goedt (*art. cit.*, 145): "Nathanael est présenté par le Christ comme le type du vrai israélite, parce qu'il est appelé à se révéler tel par la confession de foi messianique en laquelle le dialogue occasionné par la parole de révélation trouve son premier sommet". (But the confession of faith goes beyond the simple proclamation of Jesus as the Messiah).

about whom Moses wrote, belief on him does not mean to break with the tradition which goes back to Moses but rather to give it its true value. Those who believe in Jesus are the true heirs of the Mosaic tradition—true Israelites!

b) *The meaning of the designation ἀληθῶς Ἰσραηλῖτης—Ἰσραηλῖτης, Ἰσραήλ and the Ἰουδαῖοι in Jn*

A contrast is obviously being drawn between "true Israelites", of whom Nathanael is the typical figure, and "false Israelites".<sup>19</sup> The name "Israelite" is reserved for those who are like Nathanael; those who are not may *call themselves* "Israelites", but have no right to do so. Those who are unlike Nathanael are obviously the "Jews". It is they who refuse to acknowledge Jesus and maintain the skepticism Nathanael showed at the outset, hardening it into opposition and hatred.

It has often been remarked that Ἰουδαῖος in Jn is an equivocal term.<sup>20</sup> It is found as a designation for: 1) the opponents of Jesus; 2) the "common" people or "crowd" (ὁ ὄχλος); 3) the Jewish people as opposed to the Gentiles; 4) the contemporaries of Jesus with their customs and practices; 5) Judeans.

The first sense (the Jews as enemies of Jesus) is the most common,<sup>21</sup> but the other meanings, which are frequent, show that Ἰουδαῖος does not always have a pejorative sense. The Jews are sometimes presented as "heilsfähig", at other times as a "massa perditionis". What is very significant is that, as a rule, the authoritative representatives of the

<sup>19</sup> The adverb, in attributive position, can be given adjectival force (Nathanael is a "true" Israelite, as opposed to "false" Israelites) or be left with its adverbial force (Nathanael is "truly" an Israelite, as opposed to those who are unworthy of the name). The difference is negligible.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. K. Bornhäuser, *op. cit.*, 139-152; W. Lütgert, "Die Juden im Johannes-evangelium", in: *Festschr. C. F. G. Heinrichi* (Leipzig, 1914), 147-154; J. Jocz, "Die Juden im Johannesevangelium", *Jud* 9 (1953) 129-142, 139ff; E. Grässer, "Die antijüdische Polemik im Johannesevangelium", *NTS* 11 (1964-65) 74-90.

<sup>21</sup> In this sense it is found some 33 × out of 70. For a statistical breakdown and exact references for the various senses, cf. Grässer, *art. cit.*, 76-77. This author does not speak of Ἰουδαῖος in the sense of "Judean" (Jn 11-12!). Bornhäuser tried to reduce the meaning of Ἰουδαῖος in Jn to "inhabitants of the province of Judea who were strict observers of the Law!" P. Richardson (*Israel in the Apostolic Church, S.N.T.S. X* (Cambridge, 1969), 180-188) tries to reduce the use of the term in the negative sense to the native Jews of Palestine as opposed to Diaspora Jews.

Jewish nation—the Pharisees and High Priests—are avowed enemies of Jesus (and his disciples) and, although they are usually distinguished from the "common" Jews (the ὄχλος), the Jews as a body are sometimes associated with them as constituting the "block" which opposes Jesus and seeks his death.

aa) Ἰουδαῖος—Ἰσραηλίτης. *The Johannine usage in the light of the OT and Jewish usage*

יהודה in the OT always retains its original meaning of a "profaner Stammesname" for the tribe of Judah; ישראל is, from the beginning, "ein sakraler Begriff".<sup>22</sup> As such, ישראל can even designate Judah in the pre-exilic literature. Only after 932 B.C. did ישראל become a designation for the Northern Kingdom (an indication that it was considered the true Israel and Judah the seceding party). With the deportation of 722 B.C. ישראל once again becomes the name of the "people of God", "eine geistliche Selbstbezeichnung" which is no longer used in a political or territorial sense. It is the "name" of God's people pure and simple and so it will remain (so much so that ישראל becomes more and more an object of hope in God's eschatological intervention in favour of his people). It thus passes on to the "remnant", living in Judah, who now have two names: ישראל and יהודה. Both have a national-religious sense, but ישראל always stresses that the Jews are the theocratic people, the people of God.<sup>23</sup>

Palestinian Judaism uses Ἰσραήλ when speaking of itself, except when there is a reason for not doing so (when Gentiles are speaking, in diplomatic correspondence or official records, etc.).<sup>24</sup> It is interesting to note that precisely during the periods of Jewish rebellions (66-70; 132-135) the consistent Palestinian usage is violated and the name ישראל is stamped on coins as the "official" name of the Jewish people.<sup>25</sup> The heated spirits of the day imagined that the "day of the Lord" was about to dawn and that "Israel" was about to be re-established in all its glory!

It is only in the writings of Hellenistic Judaism that Jews, influenced by Gentile usage, refer to themselves as Ἰουδαῖοι,<sup>26</sup> notwithstanding the pejorative sense the name often had on the lips of the Gentiles.<sup>27</sup> When the name Ἰσραήλ was used by Hellenistic Judaism, the "religious" overtones of the word were much more pronounced than in the writings of Palestinian Judaism.<sup>28</sup>

It is not our purpose to try to establish whether Jn was a Jew of the Diaspora or a Palestinian. In either case (but even more so if he

<sup>22</sup> G. von Rad, *TWNT* III, art. Ἰσραήλ, 357.

<sup>23</sup> Von Rad, *ibid.*, 358; K. G. Kuhn, *ibid.*, 360-361.

<sup>24</sup> Kuhn, *ibid.*, 361-363.

<sup>25</sup> E. Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi* (Leipzig, 1901-1911), I, 762ff; 767.

<sup>26</sup> Kuhn, *TWNT* III, 364-366.

<sup>27</sup> Kuhn, *ibid.*, 361, 10f.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 364, 39ff; 366, 6ff.

was a Jew of the Diaspora) he would be aware of the difference between *Ἰσραηλίτης* and *Ἰουδαῖος* and would know that *Ἰσραηλίτης* is a "titre de noblesse". If the background we suggested for the controversy reflected in Jn is that which raged between the Synagogue and the Church at the end of the first century, Jn could furthermore not have ignored that the Rabbis always referred to their people as *Ἰσραήλ* and considered themselves *Ἰσραηλῖται*, not *Ἰουδαῖοι*.<sup>29</sup>

The Synagogue appropriated to itself the spiritual legacy of Moses and considered only those who accepted the tenets of normative Judaism to be members of the "people of God". Jewish-Christians no longer had the right to consider themselves Jews (or rather : Israelites) for they had betrayed the religious-national heritage of the "chosen people"—the Torah.<sup>30</sup> Jn naturally tends to respect the distinction "orthodox" Jews make between themselves and Jewish-Christians, especially since this very circumstance has forced him and his community to take the opposite stand and to affirm that they are the true heirs of the Mosaic tradition. Jn respects the distinction *as a fact*, but *in principle* he is not ready to concede that only "orthodox" Jews can be called Jews. This determines the ambiguous usage of *Ἰουδαῖος* in the Fourth Gospel. The term is used in a "neutral" or "positive" sense to designate the ethnic group to whom Jn and his community still feel bound. On the other hand, *Ἰουδαῖος* tends to become identified with the religious-national community constituted by "normative" Judaism (the Synagogue) and is therefore also used in a "negative" sense which is specifically Johannine. Finally, the honorific titles *Ἰσραήλ*, *Ἰσραηλίτης* are used to designate Jewish-Christians. They are dissociated from the group which antagonizes the disciples of Jesus (the "Jews") and even *tend*, as a result of this, to be dissociated from the Jews as a nation. They do not exclude Jews in the non-specific Johannine sense (quite the contrary!), but they emphasize faith in Jesus, not nationality. Faith characterizes Israelites, disbelief characterizes the "Jews" (in the specific Johannine sense). In other words : whereas *Ἰουδαῖος* in Jn can have a purely ethnic-national meaning (and, consequently, a "neutral" or "positive" sense), *Ἰουδαῖος* in the specific Johannine sense has a "religious-

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 363, 13-28.

<sup>30</sup> Lütgert (*art. cit.*) has seen that the term *Ἰουδαῖος* is associated with a religious attitude—faithfulness to the Law, but he has tried to reduce the term exclusively to this meaning and has overlooked the ethnic-geographical meaning of the term.

national" meaning (and, consequently, a pejorative sense). A Jew can either become a "Jew" (opponent of Jesus) or an "Israelite", a member of the new people of God. *Ἰσραήλ* always has a positive sense!

bb) *The "positive" meaning of Ἰσραήλ in Jn*

Jn uses *Ἰσραήλ* and *Ἰσραηλῖτης* very sparingly. *Ἰσραήλ* is used four times (1,31.49; 3,10; 12,13), *Ἰσραηλῖτης* once (1,47). The numerical difference already stands out; *Ἰουδαῖος* is used some 70 times! The terms are obviously not equivalent.

*Jn 1,31.* We have mentioned in passing that John the Baptist came *ἵνα φανερωθῇ* (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ—v. 34) τῷ *Ἰσραήλ*. Is Israel to be identified with the Jewish nation (as a religious-national body)? The manifestation of Jesus is linked with his true identity. The "manifestation" or "revelation" of Christ cannot be dissociated from the mystery of his person; if he is revealed, he is revealed as the Son of God. But to whom is this revelation made?

The verb *φανεροῦν* is always used absolutely, except in 1,31; 7,4 and 17,6. In 7,4 the indirect object is τῷ κόσμῳ. The brethren of Jesus want him to manifest himself to the "world" to which they, as unbelievers, belong (7,5).<sup>31</sup> They ask him to manifest himself, as the Messiah they think he is, by acts of power—which is the only manifestation the world is able to perceive. Jesus, who refuses the glory of men, does not comply with their request. When his hour comes he will manifest himself, but it will not be in the manner desired by his brethren and it will not be to the "world" (14,22!). Although a "public" manifestation (and in this sense Jesus does manifest himself to the world), the work of Jesus and the δόξα manifested therein cannot be perceived by all. In his priestly prayer (17,6) Jesus claims, "I have manifested (ἐφάνερωσα) your name to those (τοῖς ἀνθρώποις) you have given me from the world (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου)". Although Jesus manifests himself to the "world" not all "receive him" (1,12), but only those who are "given" to Christ by the Father (6,37; 10,29), who are "drawn" by the Father (6,44). To these Christ truly "manifests" himself. Christ is manifested to those who believe. It is the belief of Thomas in Jesus as (Son of) God that

<sup>31</sup> On the relationship of the κόσμος in Jn to the Jewish world, cf. Richardson, *op. cit.*, 182-184.



brings the revelation of Christ in the Gospel of John to its term. And, for those who will believe without seeing, Jn adds: "These things have been written that you may believe that Jesus is ... the Son of God (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ)" (20,31). It is in this sense that one must interpret 1,31. John was not sent to reveal Jesus to the "Jews", but to Israel; that is to say: to those Jews who, like Nathanael, were willing to accept the ἀλήθεια when confronted with it. As a result of his testimony the first disciples come to Jesus. When Nathanael, the last one, comes, Jesus calls him a true Israelite, a true representative of the Israel to which Jesus was to be "revealed".

*Jn 3,10.* We have already dealt with this text.<sup>32</sup> Nicodemus, the Pharisee, is not seriously called ὁ διδάσκαλος τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. There is much irony in the words of Jesus. Nicodemus (and those he represents) cannot be called the qualified teacher of Israel since he cannot grasp even the ἐπίγεια; he who had come to acquire a deeper insight into the "mysteries" of God's kingdom proves to be incapable of grasping even the most elementary teaching. Jesus is saying, "You claim to be the authorized teacher (behind this one sees the whole teaching authority of normative Judaism) of Israel,<sup>33</sup> yet you do not understand what I am teaching you. This shows that, although you may be considered a 'teacher' by the Jews, you are not worthy of the name ὁ διδάσκαλος τοῦ Ἰσραήλ." The title διδάσκαλος, given by Nicodemus (the Pharisee!) to Jesus at 3,2, thus acquires its full force: Jesus is the only qualified teacher of Israel, of the true people of God—those born again of water and Spirit.

*Jn 12,13.* The text is very important because it is the only other time Jesus is addressed as "the King of Israel". The acclamation comes as the climax of Jesus' public ministry: his triumphant entry into Jerusalem. It is noteworthy that the title βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ is not found in the Synoptic accounts of this scene and that Jn has added this title to the quotation from Ps 118,25f. There is every reason to believe that βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ and βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων are not equivalent. The latter title is much more frequent and is never found in a context such as that of 1,49 or 12,13. The title βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων is found exclusively in the Passion

<sup>32</sup> See above, pp. 85-87; 288f.

<sup>33</sup> See the remark of Bultmann (103, n. 1): "in dir begegne ich dem Lehrertum Israels; du repräsentierst es".

narrative<sup>34</sup> and the whole point of its use there is to show that Jesus is *not* the King of the Jews.

It is wrong to say that the trial presents Jesus as the King of the Jews. It presents him as a king but, as Jn 18,33-38 illustrates, not as the King of the Jews. Between the question of Pilate, "Are you the King of the Jews?" (v. 33) and the answer of Jesus, "You say I am King" (v. 37b) Jn inserts a dialogue which is meant to clarify that the title "King of the Jews" is not accurate. The evangelist again returns on this point in v. 37b,c. Jesus *is* a king, but not "of the Jews".<sup>35</sup> These verses are most often explained in the sense that Jesus rejects an understanding of his kingship and kingdom which would view them as national-political. In our opinion, it seems arbitrary to maintain that what we have here is an opposition between a "political-national" and an "eschatological" understanding of Jesus' kingship.<sup>36</sup> The idea is certainly present, but the theological intention of Jn goes beyond this. Jesus says that his kingdom is not of this world; he is king of those who are of the "truth", of those who believe on him and accept his revelation. In the Passion narrative the Jews *as a nation*<sup>37</sup> are considered enemies of Jesus, they are those who are not of the truth. Consequently, those who are "of the truth", the subjects of Jesus, *are not Jews*, and it is of these that Jesus is king. Jesus is not the "King of the Jews", he is "the King of Israel".<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> It must be pointed out that the obvious reason for this is that, in all cases, either Pilate is speaking or the Jews are speaking with Pilate; it is normal to use the term Ἰουδαῖος and not Ἰσραήλ in such cases. However, what is more important is the use to which Jn puts this usage. βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ is found only in Mt 27,42 and Mk 15,32, used in mockery by the Jews, Jn has both Nathanael and the ὄχλος acclaim Jesus as βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. In the first case the title is used in a ὁμολογία, in the second it is a triumphant acclamation. The use of βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων in the Passion narrative assumes special significance in virtue of this previous usage. One must further note that: a) when the Jews ask Pilate to write, "He said, 'I am King of the Jews'", a Jewish reader would perceive that the claim, on the lips of Jesus, would have been, "I am the King of Israel" (cf. Mt 27,42; Mk 15,32; where Jesus' words are faithfully repeated); b) "the King of the Jews" is not a Christian messianic title; "the King of Israel" is.

<sup>35</sup> The role the βασιλεὺς-motive plays in the trial has been well analyzed by Blank (*art. cit.*, BZ 3 (1959) 60-81), but he has not brought out the significance of the title βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, as opposed to βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. Meeks (*op. cit.*, 76-80) has marked the distinction quite clearly.

<sup>36</sup> So Blank (*art. cit.*, 69), repeating a common opinion; see also Meeks, *op. cit.*, 64.

<sup>37</sup> The same may be said of the use of Ἰουδαῖος at Jn 6,41.52; 10,31.33; 11,8.54.

<sup>38</sup> "Für das Evangelium ist Jesus nicht der König der Judäer ... sondern der König

The Fourth Gospel presents Jesus (particularly in the trial) as *the rejected king of the Jews*, as he who should have been "the King of the Jews" (but not in the national-political sense) had "his own" not rejected him. Jn brings this out with tragic irony throughout the trial.<sup>39</sup> Especially important is Jn 19,4-7. Jesus is presented to the Jews as a king, wearing a crown and a purple robe. The acclamation of the Jews is "Crucify him". The next scene (19,12-16) is marked with particular solemnity: the place, the day, the hour are given. It was the day of the Preparation of the Passover—the commemoration of the liberation of Israel from Egypt. It is the last chance for the Jews. Pilate again presents Jesus to the Jews as their king: "Here is your king" (v. 14). The Jews again answer, "Crucify him". Pilate underlines the enormity of their request, "Shall I crucify your King?" The Chief Priests (= Jews) answer, "We have no king but Caesar".

When one recalls what has been said at Jn 11,45ff, how the High Priests and Pharisees had decided to kill Jesus because they feared that he would cause an intervention of the Romans which would take away their last vestige of autonomy, this final scene assumes added depth. The Jews reject the Son of God and acclaim Caesar as their king and ruler. In so doing, they abdicate their privileges as the theocratic people and their right to consider themselves the "people of God".<sup>40</sup> The "hour" marks the moment in which Judaism dissociates itself from Israel or, expressed on other terms: the hour marks the moment in which a new "people of God" comes into existence, a people which is no longer identical with the Jewish nation as a "religious-national" body, and of which Jesus is King.

The inscription on the cross reads: "The King of the Jews". Why not: "The King of Israel"? One would expect this title, since the cross is the throne of Jesus and his crucifixion his "exaltation".<sup>41</sup> One must bear in mind that there was an enormous weight of tradition

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Israels". Bornhäuser, *op. cit.*, 148 (the observation is correct, but we disagree with the meaning the author gives to 'Ιουδαίος and 'Ισραήλ). In the same sense Meeks, *op. cit.*, 80; but we fail to see how "Jesus remains king of the disbelieving world as well as of the believers".

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Blank, *art. cit.*, and de la Potterie, *art. cit.*, *Bib* 41 (1960) 217-247; esp. 236-247.

<sup>40</sup> The affirmation of Lagrange (ad 19,14) that the "hour" "marque la fin du judaïsme, lequel s'est condamné en faisant condamner Jésus" needs a slight correction. It marks the end of Judaism only in the sense that Judaism thereby abdicates its right to consider itself the heir of God's promise, the "chosen people". Rightly Hoskyns (525).

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 29-33.

on this point and that Jn, in all probability, did not wish to alter this important historical fact.<sup>42</sup> But he *did* point out that the title has universal significance (it was written in Latin, Hebrew and Greek) and, what is even more important, was careful to show that the title given to Jesus by Pilate *was not accepted by the Jews*. He alone remarks that the Jews went to Pilate and asked, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews', but 'This man said, I am King of the Jews'" (19,21). The Jews refuse to accept Jesus as their king to the bitter end. In this way, Jn underlines that the Exalted Lord is not the King of the Jews, but the King of Israel.

We may now return to Jn 12,13. Jesus enters triumphantly into Jerusalem as the King of Israel. He does not reject the title proclaimed by the people; he performs a symbolic act meant to reveal the true meaning of the title. The evangelist remarks that his disciples understood these things after Christ's glorification. It was then that the true nature of his royalty was perceived. The crowd gives him the right title, but on their lips it is a "prophetic" utterance with a deeper meaning. Not only was Jesus not the national-political Messiah the Jews expected, he was not the King of the Jews at all, but the King of Israel.

This finale is a perfect conclusion to Jesus' public ministry. The idea of his approaching death dominates the chapter; his rejection by the Jews and the salvific significance of his "exaltation" receive great emphasis. By presenting him as the King of Israel at this climactic moment, Jn wishes to bring to the reader's attention that Jesus is about to die to establish his "kingdom"—he is about to die *ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ*, to gather into one *τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ διεσκορπισμένα* (11,50-52).

Caiaphas had prophesied that Jesus was to die *ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ*, that not all the *ἔθνος* perish. Jn gives great importance to this prophecy which seals the fate of Jesus. The passage from *λαός* to *ἔθνος* in v. 50 and the commentary of the evangelist (*ἐπροφήτευσεν ὅτι ἔμελλεν Ἰησοῦς ἀποθνήσκειν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἔθνους καὶ οὐχ ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἔθνους μόνον ἀλλ' ἵνα κ.τ.λ.*) seek to bring out that a) Jesus dies for the new "people", for the community of believers (*ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ ... ἵνα τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ διεσκορπισμένα συναγάγῃ εἰς ἓν*), b) and not for the Jewish nation as such.<sup>43</sup> Once again it is obvious

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Meeks, *op. cit.*, 79 and n. 1.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Pancaro, *art. cit.*, *NTS* 16 (1969-1970) 114-129 and above, pp. 122-125.

that the λαός (τοῦ θεοῦ) is dissociated from the Jewish nation (as a religious-national body). Israel is no longer to be identified with the "Jews" (= Synagogue as *Gesamtgemeinde*), although, through the death of Jesus, many Jews were called to form the new Israel.

An examination of Jn 10,14-16 leads to the same conclusion.<sup>44</sup> Jesus is presented as the shepherd of the one flock which is constituted by those who hear his voice, who believe on him. Israel in the OT was called the flock whose shepherd is Yahweh. The rulers were also called "shepherds", but they had proved unfaithful (Ez 34,2-10). God had therefore promised that, in the messianic restoration, he would become the shepherd of Israel (Ez 34,11-22). Micah had spoken of the prince from Bethlehem as the shepherd of Israel (Mic 5,3) and Ezekiel had God say, "I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David (the Messiah, the anointed King) and he shall feed them and be their shepherd" (Ez 34,23). Jn presents Jesus as the shepherd of Israel predicted by Ezekiel, *but distinguishes between Israel and the Jews*. The Jews (as a religious-national body) are a fold (αὐλή), not the flock (ποιμνῇ). Jesus gathers the sheep which belong to him from the Jewish fold (αὐλή) to form the flock (ποιμνῇ). The flock of which Jesus is shepherd is Israel; Judaism has become a "fold" and ceased to be the flock of Yahweh.

The transferral of the privileges of Israel to believers is also visible in Jn 8,31ff, a text we have already touched upon.<sup>45</sup> Jn emphasizes that it is not physical descent from Abraham which makes one a τέκνον τοῦ Ἀβραάμ, but one's attitude towards Jesus and his words. The Jews believe they are "free" because they are σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ; Jesus tells them that it is only by becoming his disciples that they will be "free". On the other hand, their refusal of Jesus proves that they are of the devil and that Abraham, who rejoiced at the day of the Lord, disclaims them as his children. The implication is that those who receive Jesus and hear his word are truly children of Abraham.

Lastly, at Jn 15,1-6, the vine, which was a traditional metaphor for Israel,<sup>46</sup> is transferred to Jesus and to his disciples. Although

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Pancaro, *art. cit.*, NTS 21 (1974-75) 396-405.

<sup>45</sup> See above, pp. 180f.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Jer 6,9; Ez 15,1-6; 12,5-10; 19,10-14; Hos 10,1; Ps 80,8-17; 2 Esd 17,5-10 and, since the image of the vine is hard to distinguish from that of the vineyard, also Is 5,1-7; 27,2-6; Jer 2,21; 5,10; Ez 17,5-10. The use of the metaphor of the vine for

Jesus affirms "I am the vine" (a thought which has antecedents in Jewish literature),<sup>47</sup> it is clear that the disciples are part of this vine (as its branches, "remaining" in the vine).<sup>48</sup> Jesus is not the stalk, but the whole vine and the disciples are "one" with him. The OT passages almost invariably speak of Israel as having become a corrupt vine,<sup>49</sup> given over for fuel (destroyed).<sup>50</sup> It is quite possible that this thought (applied by Jn to "orthodox" Judaism) underlies the Johannine "mashal". Jesus and his disciples, not orthodox Judaism, constitute the new vine, the new Israel. The Synagogue is superseded by the Church.<sup>51</sup>

From what has been said it has become apparent that Jn could hardly have designated Nathanael as ἀληθὺς Ἰουδαῖος! The typical "Jews" for Jn are the Pharisees and the High Priests. Nathanael is designated as a member of Israel, one worthy of the name Israelite, *because he is a believer*. It is only after the true Israelite has been defined that Nathanael, in this quality (not as a Jew, but as a believer, as a member of the "people of God"), makes his "confession" of faith. Both the υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ and βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ are to be taken as more than messianic titles.

Nathanael, as a true member of God's people, confesses that Jesus is the "Son of God" in the strict sense and acclaims him as his King and the King of those who, like him, pass from doubt to faith.

### C) Symbolism

One has only to read M.-E. Boismard's exegesis<sup>52</sup> of Jn 1,45-51 to become aware of how much symbolism may possibly be contained in these few verses. That some amount of symbolism is present cannot

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Israel is frequent in Rabbinical literature (see the texts quoted by *Str.-Bill.*, II, 563f). Bultmann and others hold that the image is derived from Gnostic and Mandaean sources but, in a careful study, R. Borig (*Der wahre Weinstock. Untersuchungen zu Joh 15,1-10* (München, 1967)) has shown that Judaism is a far more probable source.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Gen 49,22; Ps 128,3; but esp. Ps 80,8-17 and 2 Bar 39,7ff. Cf. further Borig, *op. cit.*, 101.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Brown (670).

<sup>49</sup> Ex 15,2,6; 19,10; Is 5,1; Jer 2,21; Hos 10,1.

<sup>50</sup> Ez 15,2,6; 19,10.

<sup>51</sup> In this sense: Hoskyns (475); Barrett (394); Brown (670). The ἀληθινός speaks in favour of the contrast.

<sup>52</sup> In: *Du baptême à Cana*.

be contested, but it is difficult to say where exegesis ends and eisegesis begins when the text is explained on the basis of allusions which are no more than probable and sometimes no more than possible.

a) *Nathanael = Israel (Jacob)*

Boismard suggests that Jn 1,47ff should be considered in the light of Is 44,1-5.<sup>53</sup> Nathanael would be called "Israel" because he is faithful to God, he serves no false gods. In the OT faithfulness to God cannot be separated from faithfulness to the Law and those who were faithful in this sense were said to "see God" or to "know God". Nathanael is promised he will see "greater things"—the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man. If, as this author believes,<sup>54</sup> the name "Israel" is taken by Jn to mean "seeing God", this would be a further corroboration of his exegesis. In keeping with the interpretation he gives to the passage, ἐν ᾧ δόλος οὐκ ἔστιν would mean that there is no falsehood or lie in Nathanael (Israel) in the religious sense of "invoking the names of false gods" (cf. Zeph 3,13, etc.).<sup>55</sup>

The construction of Boismard is suggestive. Its main weakness (and it is a serious one) is that there is little or nothing in the Johannine text itself to support it. In our opinion all that can be said with certitude is that there is some reference in Jn 1,45-51 to Jacob (Israel) and that Nathanael is very probably identified with Jacob-Israel, as representative type of the new Israel. There is, to begin with, the parallelism: John comes that Jesus may be revealed *to Israel*, as the Son of God—Nathanael, designated *as a true Israelite* confesses Jesus as the Son of God. Then there is the solemn "revelation" formula: Jesus sees Nathanael and says, "Behold a true Israelite". Nathanael, the type of the believer, is compared to Jacob—whose name was changed to Israel and from whom Israel, in the popular etymology, derived its name. His characterization as one in whom there is no δόλος recalls Gen 27,35 and he is promised a vision analogous to that enjoyed by Jacob (Israel). An interpretation which goes back to Augustine connects Jn 1,51 with Gen 28,12, where Jacob sees a ladder extending from heaven to earth and angels ascending and descending

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 99-101. The patristic evidence accumulated by Boismard is impressive, but the view of the Fathers (probably derived from Philo) is not necessarily that of Jn.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Boismard, *ibid.*, 96-97.

upon it. Nathanael will see the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man. The words τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνεωγόντα καὶ τοὺς ἀγγέλους τοῦ θεοῦ ἀναβαίνοντας καὶ καταβαίνοντας ἐπὶ ... are found in the LXX (Gen 28,12) in the same order in which they are found in Jn: ... εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ θεοῦ ἀνέβαινον καὶ κατέβαινον ἐπ' αὐτῆς. The promise to Nathanael means that he will recognize Jesus as the new "locus" of divine revelation (cf. Gen 28,16f).<sup>56</sup>

If δόλος is given the sense of ψεῦδος, the designation of Nathanael as "Israel" in whom there is no δόλος can perhaps be related to Jn 8,44.55, where the Jews are denied the right to call themselves children of Abraham or of God because they are characterized by ψεῦδος (unbelief and hatred for Jesus and his revelation) like their father, the devil. The characteristic of the new Israel is its love for the ἀλήθεια Jesus is and brings.

#### b) *Nathanael and the fig tree*

Jesus tells Nathanael that he has seen him under the fig tree before Philip called him. The astonishment this provokes cannot be explained unless some symbolism is contained in the affirmation. Just what the nature of this symbolism is is difficult to determine and many suggestions have been made. There is one which deserves some consideration.<sup>57</sup> The Rabbinical writings compared the Law to a fig tree and Rabbis sometimes studied and taught under a fig tree. Even the Synoptics compare the dispensation of the Law to a (barren) fig tree.

A tradition which goes back to Augustine, as we have mentioned, held that Nathanael was a doctor of the Law, "in lege peritissimus". Augustine was probably acquainted with the fig tree as a symbol for the Law (or its study).

Whether such symbolism is present or not is, in ultimate analysis, of secondary importance. In virtue of 1,45, Nathanael is granted some knowledge of the Law and, in confessing Christ, he recognizes him as the fulfilment of the Law.

<sup>56</sup> For a conspectus of interpretations of "the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man", cf. Brown, 90-91.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. *Str.-Bill.*, II, 371 (ad Jn 1,48).



PART THREE

THE TRIAL BEFORE PILATE AS THE “DÉNOUEMENT”  
OF THE CONFRONTATION OF JESUS WITH  
THE JEWS AND “THEIR” LAW



## CHAPTER TEN

### THE TRIAL BEFORE PILATE AS THE "DÉNOUEMENT" OF THE CONFRONTATION OF JESUS WITH THE JEWS AND "THEIR" LAW

Blank,<sup>1</sup> following E. Peterson,<sup>2</sup> has had the merit of pointing out that the title "Jesus and Pilate" does not do justice to the trial before Pilate, as it is set forth in the Fourth Gospel. The real title should be "Jesus and the Jews before Pilate" or, better yet, "Pilate and the Jews before Jesus".<sup>3</sup> This goes against the views of Bultmann<sup>4</sup> and Schlier,<sup>5</sup> who see in the trial before Pilate a confrontation between Jesus and the State. We are in complete agreement with Blank on this point. Pilate is nothing but a dramatic "foil"—the whole hearing before the Roman procurator is, in reality, the (retrospective) conclusion of the confrontation between Jesus and the Jews.<sup>6</sup>

Having played such an important role in this confrontation so far, we would expect that the Law should again play a dominant role in what represents the climax of the whole drama. The fact that the word νόμος is found only twice during the trial should not mislead us. The Law is everywhere present and the trial shows, more clearly than ever, that Jn wishes to present Jesus not as one who is opposed to the Law, but as the one who comes to fulfill the Law.

#### 1. THE Ἰουδαῖοι OF JN 18,28-19,42 AS ENEMIES OF JESUS AND SCRUPULOUS OBSERVERS OF THE LAW, THE "PEOPLE OF THE LAW"

In dealing with Jn 1,45, we spoke<sup>7</sup> about the two basic meanings

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<sup>1</sup> *Art. cit.*, BZ 3 (1959), 60-81.

<sup>2</sup> E. Peterson, "Zeuge der Wahrheit", in: *Theologische Traktate* (1956), 165-224.

<sup>3</sup> Blank, *art. cit.*, 63.

<sup>4</sup> *Comm.*, 507.

<sup>5</sup> H. Schlier, "Jesus und Pilatus nach dem Johannesevangelium", in: *Die Zeit der Kirche. Exegetische Aufsätze und Vorträge* (Freiburg i. Br., 1956), 56-74.

<sup>6</sup> One should beware, however, of making of the trial before Pilate "der eigentliche Prozess der Juden gegen Jesus" (see what has been said above, p. 140, n. 45). Our whole exposition of the "trial" of Jesus by the Jews during the public ministry and the scope and purpose we will attribute to the trial before Pilate are a refutation of both this view and that of Schlier and Bultmann (followed recently by Meeks, *op. cit.*, 64ff).

<sup>7</sup> See above, pp. 293-296.

Ἰουδαῖοι can have in Jn, according to whether the Jews are considered predominantly as an ethnic group or as a religious-national body. In Jn 18,28-19,42 the term has lost all its ambivalence; it always stands for the avowed enemies of Jesus, who seek to obtain his condemnation and execution at all costs. It is therefore no longer possible to distinguish between the Ἰουδαῖοι and the ὄχλος, between the Jews and the High Priests or their servants. The Jews as a nation appear as Christ's enemies.

The people who are acting and with whom Pilate is dealing in Jn 18,28-30 are defined as οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι in v. 31. At 18,35 Pilate says: μήτι ἐγὼ Ἰουδαῖος εἰμι; τὸ ἔθνος τὸ σὸν καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς παρέδωκάν σε ἐμοί. The Ἰουδαῖοι form one "block", the whole ἔθνος (with their leaders, the ἀρχιερεῖς) are the Ἰουδαῖοι who have "handed over" Jesus to Pilate. Pilate speaks of them as τὸ ἔθνος τὸ σὸν, but Jesus (Jn) dissociates himself from them: "If my kingship were of this world, my servants would fight ἵνα μὴ παραδοθῶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις (18,36). At 18,38.40; 19,4-7, Jn can speak indiscriminately of οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι and οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ ὑπῆρται. At 19,12.14 Pilate is speaking with the Jews, but then it is the ἀρχιερεῖς who cry out, "We have no other king but Caesar" (v. 15). Pilate then hands over Jesus αὐτοῖς. The αὐτοῖς should refer to the ἀρχιερεῖς, but they cannot be distinguished from the Jews (παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς—19,16; ἵνα μὴ παραδοθῶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις—18,36).<sup>8</sup> At Jn 19,20 "many Jews" read the inscription on the cross; at 19,21 it is the ἀρχιερεῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων who go to Pilate to protest; at 19,31 it is again the Jews who go to Pilate and ask that Jesus' legs be broken. We have also seen that Ἰουδαῖος, in the title βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, is a designation for the people who have rejected Christ and that Jn makes it clear that Jesus is not the "King of the Jews" but "the King of Israel".<sup>9</sup>

To wish to distinguish in Jn 18,28-19,42 between the Jews 1) as enemies of Jesus, 2) as *Volksmenge* (in an unqualified sense), 3) as an ethnic group distinct from the pagans and 4) as the contemporaries

<sup>8</sup> The verbs at 18,36 (ἡγωνίζοντο ... ἵνα μὴ παραδοθῶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις) describe an action which would be taking place and going on while Jesus is speaking (impf.) in order to prevent a future action (subj. aor.). Jesus is saying that his servants would be fighting in order to prevent Pilate from handing him over to the Jews; which is exactly what Pilate will do at 19,16!

<sup>9</sup> See above, pp. 296-302; esp. 297-300.

of Jesus, with their customs and practices of that time, is to introduce distinctions which are simply not supported by the text.<sup>10</sup> Pilate, for example, speaks of the Jews as an ethnic group from which he, as a Gentile, distinguishes himself, but these Jews are the very ones who have "handed over" Jesus to him and to whom Jesus is about to be "handed over" (18,35.36; 19,16).

Jesus was brought to Pilate on the day of the Preparation of the Passover and was crucified on that same day. At 18,28 Jn tells us that the Jews "did not enter the praetorium, so that they might not be defiled, but might eat the Passover". The legal principle which is alluded to here is apparently that which is found in Mishnah Ohalot 18,7, which declares the houses of non-Jews (in Israel) to be (levitically) impure.<sup>11</sup> The impurity contracted by entering such a house (if it was contaminated by buried foetuses, etc.) lasted seven days (cf. Num 19,14) and therefore would exclude one from eating the Passover offering (cf. Num 9,6).<sup>12</sup> The text is said to go back to R. Eliezer (c. 90 A.D.) and may be supposed to have been known at the time of Jesus' death (or, at least, at the time of the writing of the Fourth Gospel).

At 19,31 the Jews ask Pilate to break Jesus' legs and have him removed from the cross. The Law (Dt 21,22-23) demanded that the bodies of crucified criminals be removed before sunset in order not to defile the land. The connection with the first day of the Passover, the great Sabbath, is not clear. Barrett believes it possible that Jn has misunderstood the prohibition,<sup>13</sup> but one can hold, with greater plausibility, that the failure to remove the bodies would have rendered the land impure and would possibly have prevented many Jews from taking part in the festivities<sup>14</sup> (cf. 11,55!), or that the

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<sup>10</sup> Grässer (*art. cit.*, 76) distinguishes between the Jews 1) as enemies of Jesus (18,12.14.31.36; 19,7.31.38); 2) as *Volksmenge* (18,20.38; 19,12.14.20.21); 3) in the "ethnic" sense (vs. pagans) (18,33.35.39; 19,3.19.21); 4) as contemporaries of Jesus with their traditions and customs of then (19,40.42). Yet, on the following page, he himself quotes G. Baum as saying that in the Passion it is not easy to distinguish between the Jews as *Volksmenge* and as an appellation for the Pharisees and High Priests. It is better to say that in Jn 18-19 the Jews are always the enemies of Jesus and that other nuances can be added to this basic qualification.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Str.-Bill.*, II, 838-839.

<sup>12</sup> Barrett (ad 18,28) questions the accuracy of Jn's statement; but see Blinzler, *Prozess*, 276, n. 1; Brown (ad 18,28).

<sup>13</sup> Ad Jn 19,31.

<sup>14</sup> Blinzler, *Prozess*, 391.

motive of the solemn Sabbath would have rendered the measure demanded by Dt 21,22-23 even more pressing in the eyes of the Jews and have offered a motive the Romans would have respected.<sup>15</sup>

The Jews who seek Jesus' death are thus presented as clinging to the minutiae of their Law and we can say that, if they are enemies of Jesus, it is because, in their mind, the Law demands his death as one who is opposed to the Law (19,7).

## 2. THE JEWISH LAW IS UNABLE TO SECURE JESUS' CONDEMNATION AND DEATH FOR HAVING CLAIMED TO BE SON OF GOD—JN 18,31; 19,6

### *Jn 18,31*

Jesus has just been led from the house of Caiaphas to the praetorium (18,28). Pilate goes out to the Jews and asks, "What charge do you bring against this man?" (18,28-29). The answer of the Jews is evasive: *εἰ μὴ ἦν οὗτος κακὸν ποιῶν, οὐκ ἂν σοι παρεδώκαμεν αὐτόν*. Pilate makes the proposal: *λάβετε αὐτόν ὑμεῖς, καὶ κατὰ τὸν νόμον ὑμῶν κρίνατε αὐτόν*. The Jews answer: *ἡμῖν οὐκ ἔξεστιν ἀποκτεῖναι οὐδένα*. What is the sense of the dialogue and of v. 31b in particular?

We believe it is first of all necessary to eliminate all "psychological" considerations and any historical "conjecture" which is not supported by the text.

Blinzler<sup>16</sup> proposes that Pilate was aware of the charge that Jesus had made himself "King of the Jews" from the beginning and wishes to force the Jews to be more specific. The Jews, who think that the charge that Jesus made himself "King of the Jews" would have sufficed, are disappointed—they therefore give an evasive answer, not wishing to betray immediately that they want Jesus to be put to death. Pilate, consequently, believes (or pretends he believes) that the "crime" of Jesus is not deserving of capital punishment and tells the Jews to judge Jesus themselves, according to their Law. The reconstruction of P. Gaechter<sup>17</sup> is even more imaginative: when the Jews had requested the aid of the Romans to arrest Jesus, Pilate had promised, more or less, that he would execute him as a rebel. But on that morning Pilate was not in a good humour—hence the disappointment of the Jews and the peculiar nature of the dialogue!

If conjectures are left aside, can any sense be made of the dialogue? Even if Pilate should want to point out that the accusation the Jews

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Brown, ad 19,31 (934).

<sup>16</sup> *Prozess*, 276-277.

<sup>17</sup> *ZKT* 78 (1956) 231.

bring against Jesus is not deserving of capital punishment (Blinzler), why should he have to remind the Jews of their rights? And, more important still, why should the Jews, who would not have brought Jesus in the first place did they not want him put to death, have to remind Pilate that they could not put anyone to death? <sup>18</sup>

In our opinion, *the two guiding principles in Jn's presentation of the trial before Pilate are theological and dramatic.*<sup>19</sup> With the help of these two principles it is possible to make good sense of Jn 18,29-31.

The *dramatic element* explains the evasive answer of the Jews. Jn will have the Jews lay their cards on the table step by step. From the vague accusation we will pass to that of the messiahship of Jesus (which is not made directly by the Jews), to his claim of being Son of God, only to revert to the accusation (this time made explicitly by the Jews) that Jesus has made himself king—but with the important addition that this is deserving of death on political grounds: Jesus is a threat to the supremacy of Caesar!

The dramatic structure of the trial is itself at the service of Jn's *theological interest* and it is only his theological viewpoint which can explain away the difficulty present in 18,31.

On the historical level the words of Pilate make no sense.<sup>20</sup> He knows that the Jews have brought Jesus to him because they desire that he be convicted and executed on a capital charge. If this were not so, they would have judged and punished him themselves.

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<sup>18</sup> Jn knows that the Jews did not have the right to inflict capital punishment (cf. v. 31) and also knows that they had the right to judge and punish crimes of a lesser nature (this is implicit in v. 31). Pilate cannot be made to ignore what is of common knowledge.

<sup>19</sup> We fail to see any strong "apologetic" tendency in the restricted sense of the word (viz., the intention of showing that Jesus was not considered an enemy of the Roman Empire, etc.). The role the "innocence" of Jesus plays is more "theological" than "apologetic".

<sup>20</sup> One should add, with T. A. Burkill ("The Trial of Jesus", *VigChrist* 12 (1958) 1-18, 11), that the answer of the Jews at 18,31 also lacks somewhat in plausibility. Pilate did not need to be reminded of the limitations of the powers of the Jews nor would the Jews have reminded Pilate of what they should not do (especially when he was openly inviting them to do it! cf. 19,6b). The argument of Blinzler that Pilate "schliesslich doch wissen muss, ob es auf einen Todesstrafprozess abgesehen ist oder nicht" (*Prozess*, 230) is perfectly useless because Jn knows, and supposes his readers know, that the Jews would never have gone to Pilate were it not a capital case. Haenchen (*art. cit.*, *Interpr* 24 (1970) 198-219, 208) has remarked that "realistically considered" the suggestion of Pilate "makes no sense. If the guilt and punishment of Jesus had fallen under the competence of the Jews, they would never have brought him to Pilate".

We need not enter into a lengthy discussion on the question as to whether the Jews, during the NT period, had the right to condemn to death and execute or the right to put to death (after the condemnation had been ratified by the Roman governor). According to Blinzler,<sup>21</sup> a person who had been judged guilty of death by the Jews had to be tried by the Roman court; the sentence was then either ratified or rejected. If the sentence was ratified, the person convicted was executed by the Romans. Many authors disagree with this, but it is clear that Jn was of this opinion, whether it corresponds to historical fact or not. We will return on this question when we deal with v. 31b.

For what reason did Jn have Pilate say what he did? According to Haenchen, the statement makes sense only because it shows that Pilate "would like to rid himself of this trial. In addition, it extorts the clarifying admission of the Jews, 'It is not lawful for us to put any man to death' ".<sup>22</sup> This explanation is based upon the premise that Pilate and his behaviour are of great interest to Jn because he wishes to show that Jesus had not been executed as a political criminal and, consequently, that the Christian community is not an anti-Roman political movement.<sup>23</sup> If this premise is accepted (we do not accept it), Haenchen's hypothesis affords, at most, a partial explanation of v. 31. It explains why Pilate is presented as anxious to turn the matter over to the Jews, but it does not quite explain why he should refer to their being able to judge Jesus according to their Law, when he knows they cannot (since they obviously want Jesus to be put to death). As for Pilate's statement serving to "extort the clarifying admission of the Jews", one may well ask what the admission clarifies. That the Jews did not have the right of inflicting capital punishment? That the matter at stake is one of life and death? Are not both these points already taken for granted by Jn when he has the Jews bring Jesus to Pilate in the first place?

### *Jn 19,6*

A similar problem is raised by Jn 19,6. Pilate tells the Jews to take Jesus and to crucify him themselves. The proposal (like that of 18,31a) does not seem to make any sense unless one affirm, as some have done, that 18,31b is a Johannine "lapsus" <sup>24</sup> and that the

<sup>21</sup> *Prozess*, Excurs X, 239-244.

<sup>22</sup> *Art. cit.*, 208.

<sup>23</sup> *Art. cit.*, 207.

<sup>24</sup> All those authors who believe that the Sanhedrin had the power to put to death consider Jn 18,31b inaccurate. They are opposed by an ever increasing number of



Jews *did* have the power to crucify<sup>25</sup> or unless one seek to conciliate the irreconcilable by affirming that Pilate is, exceptionally, making lawful what is unlawful.<sup>26</sup> Even Blinzler, who proposes that the words are an indignant refusal to comply with the wishes of the Jews,<sup>27</sup> admits that there is a "gewisse Spannung" between 18,31b and 19,6.<sup>28</sup>

It is important to note that the seemingly absurd proposal of Pilate again provokes a statement of the Jews which is not devoid of theological interest (see below). Again we must ask whether there may not be a theological motive behind Pilate's proposal (and the reply of the Jews) which could account for an exchange of words which seems historically questionable.

We believe that Haenchen is correct in suggesting that the motive behind Jn 18,31 is theological, but that the theological (apologetic) motive afforded by him is not satisfactory. In our opinion, there is another avenue of approach which is better able to explain both Jn 18,31 and 19,6. It is also more in keeping with Jn's theological interests and with his presentation of the Law in particular.

### *Jn 18,31*

Pilate is inviting the Jews to do exactly what they have unsuccessfully attempted to do with every means at their disposal. The invitation of Pilate and the reply of the Jews are theologically

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exegetes who defend the Johannine accuracy. Cf. Blinzler, *Prozess*, 231-233, for a conspectus of the controversy. More recently, Derrett (*op. cit.*, 433) has also come out in support of Blinzler.

<sup>25</sup> Not all those who hold that the Sanhedrin could inflict capital punishment believe that they could crucify. Among those who do: P. Winter, "The Trial of Jesus and the Competence of the Sanhedrin", *NTS* 10 (1963-64) 494-499, 497.

<sup>26</sup> So Schlier, *art. cit.*, 68.

<sup>27</sup> To take the words of Pilate at 19,6 as an indignant refusal: "If you want the death of this man, you'll have to crucify him yourselves, I will not", seems to be the only possible way of getting out of the difficulty, even though one must admit that, even as a refusal, the words make sense only if Pilate is speaking sarcastically: "I will not crucify him, and you certainly cannot". To hold that Pilate is speaking seriously (Zahn, Loisy, W. Bauer, Schlatter, Schlier) would contradict 18,31b. It is improbable that Jn would not have noticed the contradiction (rightly Brown, *ad loc.*). Furthermore, such behaviour would go against Roman law, which did not permit the transferral of the *ius gladii* (cf. Derrett, *op. cit.*, 428f), and Jewish Law, which did not allow the shedding of blood.

<sup>28</sup> *Op. cit.*, 230. Fortna (*op. cit.*, 122f) rightly ascribes 18,31b-32 to Jn but then (125f) affirms that 19,6 ("a late bit of propaganda"!) probably belongs to the "source".

motivated and are to be understood in the light of the many instances in which the Jews have sought in vain to "judge" Jesus according to their Law and to put him to death.

The reply of the Jews to Pilate takes on a double meaning: a) they are not allowed by Roman law to put anyone to death; b) *their* Law cannot lead to the condemnation and death of Jesus (just as it could not lead to his conviction). Jn's interest is clearly focused on the second point.<sup>29</sup> The Jews have repeatedly tried to put Jesus to death in the name of their Law, they must now admit their impotence. Behind the reference to the Roman legislation of the time, Jn expresses the conviction that the Jewish Law could not lead to the condemnation and death of Jesus in the manner intended by the Jews (whereby Jesus would be killed as a "sinner", blasphemer, etc.). The Law should rather have led to Jesus' acquittal, as we have seen.

### *Jn 19,6*

Pilate is inviting the Jews to crucify Jesus, well knowing that they cannot. Again it is the impotence of the Jews which is being brought to the reader's attention, as is confirmed by the reply to Pilate's suggestion. The very Law to which they appeal was shown by Jn to be incapable of proving Jesus guilty and securing his condemnation on the charge that he made himself Son of God—this is now brought out by the very circumstance that the Jews have to have recourse to a pagan governor to obtain what *their* Law demands.

The Law which demands Jesus' death (19,7) cannot secure his death (18,31; 19,6) for having made himself Son of God. Jn illustrates the point he is making at 18,31 and 19,6 in his usual subtle manner: 1) The Jews have Jesus condemned not on the true charge (that he

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<sup>29</sup> This is brought out by a minor philological detail which should not be left unnoticed: the οὐκ ἔξεστιν of Jn 18,31b. "Die häufigste Bedeutung von ἔξεστιν im NT bezieht sich auf das Gesetz und den Willen Gottes" (W. Foerster, *TWNT* II, art. ἔξεστιν, 558, 19f) and corresponds to the "technical" Rabbinic "אין רשות ל" (*ibid.*, 558, 41f; 562, n. 29). For what concerns Jn 18,31b, the meaning "our Law does not allow us ..." is all the more present (behind the obvious reference to the legal situation of the Jews at the time) because Pilate has just referred to the *Jewish* Law (18,31a). When one further recalls that Jesus tells Pilate he would have no ἐξουσία over him unless it were given to him from above (see below), it seems obvious that Jn wishes to say that the Law does not allow the Jews to kill Jesus and that, on the other hand, the death of Jesus is a direct result of the divine will, which gives this power to Pilate (and, in this sense, Jesus must die according to the Law).

made himself Son of God), but on a false charge (that he claimed he was a political Messiah). 2) It is the will of the Father which demands the death of Jesus (in this sense his death is *κατὰ τὸν νόμον*!). Pilate puts Jesus to death, but only in virtue of the *ἐξουσία* given to him from above.

### 3. JESUS IS CONDEMNED ON A FALSE CHARGE

The first real "charge" (18,29) the Jews bring against Jesus is political: he made himself "King of the Jews".<sup>30</sup> The accusation is examined in 18,33-19,6. The examination shows that the charge is obviously false, for the kingdom of Jesus "is not of this world" (v. 37). Pilate is not supposed to understand this, but the reader is!<sup>31</sup> Pilate understands only that Jesus is not guilty of any political pretensions and underscores the innocence of Jesus.<sup>32</sup> When Pilate declares the innocence of Jesus for the third time (19,6; comp. 18,38; 19,4), the Jews lay a religious charge against Jesus: he made himself "Son of God" (19,7). The reaction of Pilate (19,8) is meant to underline the enormous injustice of the accusation. He is a pagan and extraneous to the whole controversy, yet he seems to sense that there is something to the claim Jesus has made. That is why Pilate seeks to release him (v. 12a). But now the Jews revert to the political accusation (v. 12b) in order to force Pilate to give in to their wishes.

The general structure of the trial before Pilate is an important key to its interpretation. The religious charge is raised before the political charge has been exploited and seems to break the dramatic development which begins at 18,33 and reaches its climax at 19,15. Jn passes

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<sup>30</sup> Jesus is first accused of being a *κακὸν ποιῶν* (18,29-30). Pilate goes into the praetorium and asks Jesus: "Are you the King of the Jews?" The question as to when or how Pilate found this out is superfluous. Jn is not interested in giving a detailed account of the proceedings. He takes for granted that Pilate is now acquainted with what he ignored in v. 29.

<sup>31</sup> We insist that Pilate is extraneous to the whole religious drama. His question, *Τί ἐστιν ἀλήθεια*? only serves to bring out the real issue at stake. Jesus' self-revelation to the Jews will lead him to the cross. To write that "der Einwand des Pilatus ist nichts anders als Ausdruck des Unglaubens" or that Pilate "den Offenbarungsanspruch Jesu ablehnt" (Hahn, *art. cit.*, 42-43) is to make a Jew of him and to involve him in a religious issue which is completely foreign and unintelligible to him.

<sup>32</sup> Jn emphasizes the innocence of Jesus more than the Synoptics, with the exception of Lk. Jesus' innocence is mentioned in Mk 15,10.14a. In Lk, as in Jn, Pilate declares Jesus innocent three times (Lk 23,4.13-15.22a).

suddenly from the political accusation—made only implicitly—(18,33-19,6) to the religious accusation (19,7-11), only to revert once again to the political accusation (19,12). Any attempt to explain the shift by saying that, juridically, the two charges are not independent is doomed to failure.<sup>33</sup> The title "Son of God" has no political overtones and the religious issue was of little importance to Pilate.<sup>34</sup>

It is not exact to say that, in the Johannine Passion narrative, "nothing is said of the charge of blasphemy preferred against Jesus in the High Priest's court".<sup>35</sup> The charge, already dealt with in the Book of Signs, is recalled at 19,7 and given considerable emphasis.<sup>36</sup>

In the Book of Signs Jn had endeavoured to show how the lack of faith of the Jews led them to seek to condemn Jesus because of his claim to be the Son of God. The claim was supported by Jesus' *σήμεῖα* and by the Law itself—consequently, the attempt of the Jews

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<sup>33</sup> Blinzler (*Prozess*, 331) writes that the Jews thereby wish to put "moral pressure" on Pilate and to arouse public opinion against Jesus. Such an interpretation seems very weak. Although one can advance that the Romans respected the beliefs of their subjects, a "religious" dispute would be of little interest to them (see following note) unless it had political implications or consequences. In the context, the accusation only serves to increase the fear of Pilate and to dispose him more favourably to Jesus; it is then dropped. This indicates that Jn did not have the Jews voice the accusation in order to put Pilate under pressure.

<sup>34</sup> Almost all exegetes admit that the "religious" accusation is distinct from the "political" accusation. The view of Aberle (quoted by Blinzler, *Prozess*, 332, n. 39), according to which "sich zum Sohne Gottes machen = den Cäsarenstuhl usurpieren" goes against the affirmation "according to our Law he must die ..." and against the Johannine theology on this point. On the other hand, we do not believe (and here we are at odds with the majority of exegetes) that the Jews name this charge only to support their main, "political" charge. Jn introduced this detail for theological reasons. "Das Verbrechen, das die Synedristen Jesus zur Last legten, die Blasphemie, bildete keine Verletzung jüdischer Kultgebräuche, gehörte also nicht zu den Delikten, deren Verfolgung das römische Recht vorsah. Die Synedristen hätten demnach wenig Aussicht gehabt, die Hinrichtung Jesu zu erreichen, wenn sie gegen diesen bei Pilatus die Anklage wegen Gotteslästerung erhoben hätten". Blinzler, *Prozess*, 248. The examples of Act 18,15; 23,29; 25,18-20 show "wie wenig die römischen Behörden am jüdischen Gesetz interessiert waren ..." *Ibid.*, 247.

<sup>35</sup> Dodd, *Interpretation*, 425. Cf. also J. Lengle ("Zum Prozess Jesu", *Hermes* 70 (1935) 312-321, 319) for whom the charge of blasphemy "spielt keine Rolle" and is only a "Unterstützung des hauptsächlichsten Klagepunktes". This is a common opinion among exegetes.

<sup>36</sup> After the disclosure of the Jews, Pilate asks Jesus: *πόθεν εἶ σὺ*? The question of the origin of Jesus, which occupied such an important place in the confrontation with the Jews (see above, pp. 22ff; 56ff; 266ff), is thus brought up for the last time.

to convict him led to an impasse. During the trial, the theme of Jesus' innocence comes to light more forcefully than ever on the basic issue: he has made himself Son of God. The affirmation that the Law condemns him as a blasphemer (19,7) appears to be totally unfounded. The reader, who knows more about Jesus' *πρόθεν* than Pilate, is meant to understand that the Law cannot possibly demand the death of Jesus on such a charge *since he is the Son of God*. Jn shows this by giving much greater emphasis than the Synoptics to the political charge.<sup>37</sup>

The reason for the abrupt shift from one charge to another is therefore obvious. There is really no break in the dramatic development. From the general charge (18,30) we pass to the messianic claim (18,33-19,6). It becomes clear that the messianic claim of Jesus has nothing to do with political ends, as Pilate himself recognizes. Then comes the religious charge, of no importance to Pilate, but of great importance to the Jews and the evangelist (19,7-12a). Even on this account Pilate does not find Jesus deserving of death (19,12a); on the contrary, he becomes uneasy and suspects there is something to this claim. The Jews then resort to a false charge: Jesus is opposed to Caesar (v. 12b).

The Synoptics also relate that Jesus was condemned by Pilate as King of the Jews, but the kingship of Jesus is not explicitly set against that of Caesar, nor is the "religious" issue so obvious. We are in complete disagreement with Dodd<sup>38</sup> when he says that the much greater stress laid upon the political charge by the Fourth Gospel "is not related to the distinctively Johannine theology" and when he adds that the importance of the *υἱὸς θεοῦ* "is reduced rather than enhanced" in Jn's account of the trial, as compared with that of the Synoptics.

In the Synoptics the whole hearing before the Sanhedrin reaches its climax when Jesus openly confesses he is the Messiah (even in Lk, although he mentions the "Son of God" title separately and emphasizes it). Considered a blasphemer, Jesus is condemned as a result of this. For Jn the title of Jesus *par excellence* is "Son of God";

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<sup>37</sup> The Synoptics relate that Jesus was condemned on a messianic-political charge, but only Jn has the Jews affirm that Jesus is a rival to Caesar and use this as a threat to force Pilate's hand and obtain Jesus' condemnation. The reason, once again, is theological (see below), although much speaks in favour of the historicity of Jn's presentation.

<sup>38</sup> *Interpretation*, 426.

the messianic title is of secondary interest (which does not mean it is unimportant!). Both titles play a major role in the trial of Jesus. The Messiah title is exploited along new lines. The Jews use the political implications it could have to force Pilate's hand. The "Son of God" title, which in the Synoptics is merely "messianic", is given a new depth of meaning throughout the Gospel. Already treated in the crucial debate related in Jn 10,24-36, it is introduced in the very midst of the trial before Pilate. The charge of blasphemy (and the other related charges) is not related to the messianic claim, but to that of divine Sonship.

Jn does not want Jesus convicted on the charge that he affirmed he was the Messiah, and not even on the charge that he made himself Son of God; although this appears as the real reason why the Jews want to kill him (19,7; comp. 10,24-36; 8,59; 11,48; 7,48f; 5,18). *Jesus is convicted on a false charge: that of being opposed to Caesar!*<sup>39</sup>

We have mentioned<sup>40</sup> that some authors see the end of the Jewish nation as the "people of God" in the outcry: "We have no king but Caesar". By rejecting Jesus, they abdicate their rights as the "chosen people". This is no doubt what Jn wished to show, but we must go further. It was the Law which made of the Jews the people of God. The condemnation of Jesus is contrary to the Law since it was meant to lead to him. The rejection of Jesus coincides with the "perversion", abuse and rejection of the Law and, since the Law is the "Existenz-grundlage" of Israel, the Jews thereby cease to be the "people of God". Jn emphasizes this by having the Jews acclaim Caesar as their king and demand the crucifixion of the King of Israel. He brings the point out even more clearly by showing that the Jews have Jesus condemned on a false charge: that of being opposed to the absolute supremacy of Caesar over the Jewish nation!

The paradox is expressed in the words of the Jews: "We have a Law and according to the Law he must die because he made himself the Son of God". The Jews have finally understood correctly. For the first time we find the title "Son of God" on their lips. The reader knows that Jesus *is* the Son of God and that, if it is true that Jesus,

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<sup>39</sup> It is highly ironical to have the Jews obtain the condemnation of their King by acclaiming Caesar as their sole ruler, especially in view of Jn 11,45ff, where the fate of Jesus is sealed because it is feared that he will cause an intervention of the Romans which will be detrimental to Jewish freedom. See above, pp. 122-125; 297-301.

<sup>40</sup> See above, pp. 124; 299.

as Son of God, must die according to the Law, it is not in the sense in which the Jews understand this. It is to this aspect of the death of Jesus that we now wish to turn our attention.

#### 4. JESUS MUST DIE *κατὰ τὸν νόμον*—Jn 19,7; 18,32

##### A) *The death of Jesus and the will of the Father*

The Jews present Jesus' death as a "must". He is guilty of having made himself Son of God and the Law demands his punishment. For Jn the death of Jesus is governed by a divine *δεῖ* and the Law demands his death in a totally different sense.

One of the main tenets of the Fourth Gospel is that the whole *ἔργον* of Jesus is governed by the Father's will.<sup>41</sup> The death of Jesus is the supreme moment of his earthly *ἐργάζεσθαι*, the act which brings his *ἔργον* to its perfection and fulfilment (*τελειοῦν*). As such, it is marked off as *the* event which is governed by the Father's will in a special way and, correlatively, is considered as the act whereby Jesus' obedience to the will of the Father and his love for him find their fullest expression.

During the trial, the verb *ἀποθνήσκειν* occurs only at 19,7 and 18,32. At 18,32 the words of the Jews *ἡμῶν οὐκ ἔξεστιν ἀποκτεῖναι οὐδένα* are commented upon by the evangelist with the words *ἵνα ὁ λόγος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ πληρωθῇ ὃν εἶπεν σημαίνων ποίῳ θανάτῳ ἤμελλον ἀποθνήσκειν*. The full significance of the comment will be examined further on,<sup>42</sup> but so much is immediately clear: it is a direct reference to Jn 12,33—*τοῦτο δὲ ἔλεγεν σημαίνων ποίῳ θανάτῳ ἤμελλον ἀποθνήσκειν*. What Jesus *said* there was: *ἐὰν ὑψωθῶ ἐκ τῆς γῆς, πάντας ἐλκύσω πρὸς ἑμαυτόν* (12,32) and the crowd had taken up these words with the question: *πῶς σὺ λέγεις ὅτι δεῖ ὑψωθῆναι τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου?*

Only when the *ὀφείλει ἀποθανεῖν* of 19,7 is related to 18,32 and 12,32.34 can its full force be perceived. Jesus' death and the manner in which he dies are the result of the Father's salvific will—a divine *δεῖ*.<sup>43</sup> True, the *δεῖ* is absent in 19,7, but the *ὀφείλει* is a synonymous

<sup>41</sup> See above, pp. 124; 155; below, pp. 368-389.

<sup>42</sup> See below, pp. 325f.

<sup>43</sup> On the use of *δεῖ* in the NT to express the immutable will of God and its infallible realization, cf. W. Grundmann, *TWNT* II, art. *δεῖ*, 22, 39ff. Especially important is

term and its use is explained by the fact that it is the adversaries of Jesus who are speaking (at 12,34 they are *quoting Jesus* and hence use *δεῖ*).<sup>44</sup>

It is the Father's will that Jesus die and that he die on the cross. Just as one cannot consider Jn 19,7 in isolation from Jn 18,32; 12,32.34, so too must the *δεῖ ὑψωθῆναι τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου* of 12,34 be considered in the light of Jn 3,14 (*ὑψωθῆναι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*) and 8,28 (*ὅταν ὑψώσῃτε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*).

a) *Jn 19,7 in the light of 12,32.34; 3,14; 8,28*

The thought contained in Jn 3,14; 12,32.34 and 8,28, with regard to the divine *δεῖ* which governs Jesus' death, is basically the same. The Son of man must be lifted up in order that all who believe on him may have eternal life. In all three (four) cases, the *ὑψωθῆναι* refers directly to Jesus' death on the cross.<sup>45</sup> The texts will merely be touched upon here, Jn 3,14 and 12,34f will be discussed in greater detail further down.<sup>46</sup>

3,14. Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness and those who looked upon it were healed, so too will the lifting up of Jesus on the cross give those who believe on him eternal life. The comparison demands that one understand the *ὑψωθῆναι* as the crucifixion of Jesus, although the "exaltation" cannot be separated (but should be distinguished) from Jesus' resurrection and ascension to the Father (his *δοξαοθῆναι*). This is confirmed by the relationship established between the *ὑψωθῆναι* and the *ἔδωκεν* (3,14.16). Both have the same result: that he who believes have eternal life. The Father "gives" the Son in that he sends him to die for the world he loves. The *ἔδωκεν* cannot be referred to the resurrection or ascension of Jesus; it is rather the *δεῖ* of Jesus' "exaltation", expressed differently.<sup>47</sup>

12,34. The same thought is present. Jesus is speaking about his death. The hour has come for him to be glorified (12,23). The glorification presupposes his death (12,24), which is his being "lifted

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the fact that already in Lk "dieses *δεῖ* hat seinen Grund in dem Schrift über ihn (Jesus) niederlegten Willen Gottes" (*ibid.*, 23, 14f). Jn also shares this view (but see what is said about the will of God in the Fourth Part of this dissertation).

<sup>44</sup> The difference of usage was already pointed out by Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 11.

<sup>45</sup> The texts are discussed at length by Thüsing, *ibid.*, 4-31.

<sup>46</sup> See below, pp. 332ff.

<sup>47</sup> We shall see the importance of this for interpreting 19,7 further on.



up" from the earth on the cross (12,32f). The result of this death will be that he will draw all to himself (and by so doing will give them eternal life).

8,28. The  $\delta\epsilon\iota$  is absent, but may be present in the  $\acute{\alpha}\pi' \acute{\epsilon}\mu\alpha\nu\tau\omicron\upsilon \pi\omicron\iota\acute{\omega}$  οὐδέν. The thought suddenly shifts from the  $\pi\omicron\iota\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$  to the  $\lambda\alpha\lambda\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$  of Jesus, otherwise the phrase could end with  $\kappa\alpha\theta\acute{\omega}\varsigma \acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\acute{\iota}\lambda\alpha\tau\acute{o} \mu\omicron\iota \acute{o} \pi\alpha\tau\acute{\eta}\rho$ , οὕτως  $\pi\omicron\iota\acute{\omega}$  (cf. 14,31 where the reference is to the death of Jesus). The result is again: that those who believe come to know that Jesus *is* (i.e., and thereby have eternal life).

These texts show that the will of the Father (that Jesus give eternal life), which is the end and purpose of Jesus' whole  $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\gamma\omicron\nu$ , is particularly the result of his being "lifted up". It brings the  $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\gamma\omicron\nu$  entrusted to him to its perfection and consummation. It is the fulfilment of the Father's will  $\kappa\alpha\tau' \acute{\epsilon}\xi\omicron\chi\acute{\eta}\nu$  and is placed under the sign of the divine  $\delta\epsilon\iota$ .

We need not go into a discussion at this point <sup>48</sup> of the relationship which exists between the "exaltation" of Jesus and the gift of eternal life. All that need be said for the time being is that the exaltation of Jesus reveals him as the Son of God who, as glorified Lord, exercises his power over all flesh. It is by dying on the cross that Jesus is "enthroned" as Lord and it is from the cross that Jesus reigns, that he draws all men, in faith, to himself (to his cross and into his heavenly glory) as the crucified and glorified Lord.<sup>49</sup> His death on the cross brings about the fulfilment of the divine will; it gives rise to the second phase of his activity, which consists in giving birth to the new "people" (Jn 11,50ff), by gathering together into one the dispersed children of God (11,52), by forming the one flock under the one Shepherd or, expressed in more general terms, which inaugurates the "gathering in" of the harvest (4,35ff) and the "bearing of fruit" (12,24; 15,1-17).

It is evident that *the death of Jesus on the cross* is therefore a "must". It is furthermore evident that it is a "must" for Jesus precisely because he is the Son of God. It is because Jesus is the Son that his death on the cross has the value and significance it has, it is because he dies on the cross that Jesus reveals himself as the Son of God.

It is not fortuitous that Jn should recall the prophecy of Caiaphas at the very outset of the hearing before Annas (18,14), which serves

<sup>48</sup> This aspect of the question will be discussed further on in this chapter.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 33.

as a prelude to the trial before Pilate. The salvific meaning of Jesus' death as well as its necessity is thereby recalled (18,14 = 11,50!). And it is hardly fortuitous that Jn 19,37 should look back to Jn 3,14 (where the necessity of Jesus' being "lifted up" was mentioned for the first time) as the realization of what had been stated there.

Jn 19,7 is to be interpreted in the light of the divine  $\delta\epsilon\iota$ . One of the main purposes Jn is pursuing during his narration of the trial is to show that Jesus dies as a result of the divine  $\delta\epsilon\iota$ , which means: freely and out of love.

During the course of the Gospel, Jn explains that the fate of Jesus is not in the hands of men, that his "hour" is that set and determined by the Father. The thought finds repeated expression during the heat of the controversy which sets in in Jn 7. The frequent attempts of the Jews to arrest or kill Jesus are doomed to failure "because his hour had not yet come" (cf. 7,30; 8,20 and comp. 7,44; 8,59; 10,18.31.39). The plotting of the Pharisees and their "official" decision to put Jesus to death (11,53.57) are of no avail until Jesus himself, at the close of his public ministry, declares that the hour of his "exaltation" has come (12,23-34), after having made clear at 10,17f that he lays down his life freely, having the power to lay it down and to take it up again. When Satan enters into Judas it is Jesus who tells him to do what he has to do (13,27). Shortly before his arrest Jesus claims that the Prince of the world has no hold on him, but that what he is about to do he does out of love for the Father and in obedience to him (14,31). Both the ideas of Jesus' free consecration of himself to his "work" and that of no one having power over Jesus except through permission of the Father are present. When the soldiers and the officers of the Jews come to arrest Jesus, his  $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\iota\mu\iota$  causes them to draw back and fall to the ground (18,6; comp. Ps 27(26),2; Ps 35(34),4). It is only after this has happened that Jesus surrenders himself to them.

Shown to be impotent against Jesus during his public ministry, the Jews are no less impotent during the trial. It is an outcome not only of the innocence of Jesus, but also of his sovereign freedom. This freedom is, paradoxically, a corollary of the divine  $\delta\epsilon\iota$ . Jn stresses the impotence of the Jews (and of Pilate) during the trial in order to assert the sovereign freedom of Jesus (as well as his innocence). If Jesus died on the cross, it was not because he was convicted as a blasphemer, etc., but out of obedience and love. The agents of his crucifixion were the Jews and Pilate, yet the efforts of the Jews would have been vain

had the Father not decreed that Jesus was to die as he did and had Jesus not freely accepted the Father's will (viz., had the will of the Father not been his own).

An important text for understanding how Jn conceives and explains the death of Jesus on the cross is 19,11. Bultmann<sup>50</sup> maintains that the enigmatic sentence is to be interpreted in the light of Rom 13. The power of Pilate is legitimate power, given by God. Even when the State abuses the power entrusted to it "so behält sein Handeln doch immer noch etwas von seiner Autorität; noch ist wenigstens die Form des Rechts gewahrt". Hence Pilate is less guilty than the Jews. H. von Campenhausen has objected to this interpretation.<sup>51</sup> He states that, since Pilate abuses the power entrusted to him, he should be considered more guilty, not less guilty, than the Jews. In view of this, von Campenhausen maintains that a "staatsphilosophische Beleuchtung" of Jn 19,11 is out of place. The principle of interpretation should rather be theological. Pilate believes he has Jesus in his power. Jesus replies that this is mere appearance—he has been given over to Pilate by the Father and the power Pilate exercises is only that given to him from above.

b) *The ἐξουσία Pilate exercises is that given to him by the Father*

Pilate is the man who is entrusted with the power to have Jesus crucified; he *must* have Jesus crucified because it is the will of the Father and of Jesus. Out of weakness and forced by political necessity, he is used by God to realize his eternal design. It is not Jesus who is in the power of Pilate, but Pilate who is in the power of the Jews and, ultimately, in the power of God. The Jews, who are totally powerless against Jesus, obtain his crucifixion only because their wish, in a mysterious manner, coincides with the divine plan. Jesus had to die not because the "world" or the Jews prevailed against him (cf. Jn 1,5), but because of the designs of divine providence, of which Pilate was the tool. Pilate appears as a sort of "deus ex machina". He acts against his will. Although he gives in to the Jews (and in this he acted freely and is guilty), the real reason behind his behaviour is that God gave him the power (and hence, in a sense, "obliged him") to do what he did. Pilate is less guilty than the Jews

<sup>50</sup> Comm., 512-513.

<sup>51</sup> "Zum Verständnis von Joh. 19,11", *ThLZ* 73 (1948) 387-392.

because he acted not out of hatred for the light, but as the one to whom the "power" was given "from above" and who was called upon to pronounce the effective death sentence against Jesus. Jn is not concerned with the guilt of Pilate, but with that of the Jews. They are the enemies of Jesus who, out of hatred, placed him "wo sich sein Schicksal gleichsam zwangsläufig vollenden muss".<sup>52</sup> It is the confrontation of Jesus with the Jews and not that between Jesus and Pilate which dominates the whole trial, as it had the whole public ministry. Pilate is a bystander, forced to take part in a drama to which he remains foreign (cf. Jn 18,35). He acts as a dramatic foil to the Jews. His impartial attitude makes the prejudice of the Jews, his sympathy towards Jesus (which is not religiously motivated) makes the hatred of the Jews (which is religiously motivated) stand out all the more.

c) *Jesus has been given over to Pilate by the Father*

It is the Father who "gives over" Jesus to death. The driving force behind the events are the Jews, but, while emphasizing their responsibility, Jn refuses to consider the crucifixion as if it had been imposed upon Pilate or Jesus by the Jews. At 3,16 Jesus says that the Father so loved the world that he "gave" (ἔδωκεν) his only Son. Jn never designates the sending of Jesus by the Father as a διδόναι. As Thüsing has remarked, the ἔδωκεν is a "betonte, spezifische Aussage".<sup>53</sup> The Son is "given" in that the Father sends him to die for the world. Paul does not hesitate to write that the Son was "handed over" (παρέδωκεν) by the Father (to death).<sup>54</sup> Although practically equivalent to παρέδωκεν, it would seem that Jn wishes to distinguish between Jesus' being handed over to death by the Father (ἔδωκεν) and his being "handed over" to death by Judas, the Jews and Pilate (παρέδωκεν). Jn may wish to distinguish between the death of Jesus insofar as it is willed by God, and insofar as it is the result of the guilt of man. Nevertheless, behind the παρέδωκεν, stands the ἔδωκεν of the Father (cf. 18,11). When Pilate naively boasts of his power to crucify him, Jesus tells him that he would have no power at all over him, were it not *given* to him from above

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<sup>52</sup> Von Campenhausen, *art. cit.*, 390.

<sup>53</sup> *Erhöhung*, 9.

<sup>54</sup> Rom 8,32; cf. also Rom 4,25; Gal 2,20 (with Jesus as subject).

(*ἦν δεδομένον σοι ἄνωθεν*) and implies that *ὁ παραδούς αὐτὸν αὐτῷ* (19,11; comp. 18,30,35) was also able to do this only because of the divine decree. When Pilate hands Jesus over to the Jews to be crucified (*παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς ἵνα σταυρωθῇ* 19,16; comp. 18, 36b), the reader understands that this is again possible only because of the *διδόναι* of the Father.

We may conclude that Jesus is presented by Jn as dying on the cross not because proven guilty or justly condemned by the Jews nor because he was at the mercy of a weak governor, but in virtue of the divine decree<sup>55</sup> which Jesus obeys freely and to which he submits out of love. The death of Jesus on the cross is the salvific act "par excellence" and, as such, "necessary". This is the thought which is expressed not only at Jn 19,7 but also at 18,32.

#### d) Jn 18,32

Jn 18,32 follows immediately upon the words of the Jews which acknowledge their impotence. In our view, there is more to vv. 31b-32 than a mere reference to the "physical" modality of Jesus' death (crucifixion). By having the Jews say that they are not allowed to kill anyone (it is obviously Jesus the evangelist has in mind)<sup>56</sup> Jn is saying that 1) Jesus was to die on the cross 2) in virtue of the divine decree (as explained above).

It is only if this interpretation is adopted that a difficulty concerning the relation of v. 32 to v. 31b which has never quite been solved receives a solution. The affirmation of v. 32 follows most logically upon v. 31b if the Jews had the right to put to death, but not to crucify. This has led some authors<sup>57</sup> to interpret v. 31b in this sense, notwithstanding the fact that the text speaks explicitly of "not being able to kill anyone" and contains no indication of any restriction of the *ἡμῖν οὐκ ἔξεστιν ἀποκτείνειν οὐδένα* to crucifixion.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>55</sup> "Dies 'müssen' macht nicht etwa eine historische Notwendigkeit offenbar, die sich aus der Situation infolge der Feindschaft des Volkes ergibt, sondern dass Leiden und Sterben eine dogmatische Notwendigkeit nach dem längst bestimmten Willen Gottes sind". K. H. Schelkle, *Die Passion Jesu in der Verkündigung des Neuen Testaments* (Heidelberg, 1949), 110.

<sup>56</sup> See what has been said above, pp. 313f.

<sup>57</sup> For this view, see esp. Hoskyns and Barrett.

<sup>58</sup> We agree that, by handing Jesus over to the Romans, the Jews—if the condemnation is obtained—*de facto* effect that Jesus die on the cross, so that it is not necessary to suppose that the Jews had the right to stone but not to crucify. However, the fact

The explanation therefore can only be that *ἡμῖν οὐκ ἐξεστὶν ἀποκτεῖναι οὐδένα* does not refer primarily to the physical modality of Jesus' death, but indicates that, since the Jews and their Law are totally incapable of obtaining his death, Jesus will die, at the hands of Pilate (who acts with the *ἐξουσία* given to him from above!), the death he has freely chosen to die, in accordance with the Father's will.<sup>59</sup> The divine *δεῖ* governs the death of Jesus and not only its physical modality. Jesus was to die freely (= at the hands of Pilate and on the cross) in order that his death, willed by him and the Father, should be a manifestation of their love and draw all men to the cross and into the glory the Son has as the one who is glorified in the presence of the Father (17,5,24).

Jn 19,7 speaks with all the clarity desired. Notwithstanding the impotence of the Jews (and the unwillingness of Pilate), Jesus *must* die. Pilate, as the one to whom "power" has been given from above, will bring to effect what the Jews cannot (18,31b; 19,6).

#### B) *The death of Jesus and the fulfilment of the Scriptures (Law)*

What have the foregoing considerations to do with Jesus having to die *κατὰ τὸν νόμον*? The question is that of the relationship of the will of the Father to the *νόμος*<sup>60</sup> and, correlatively, that of the relationship of the *ἔργον* of Jesus to the "doing" or "fulfilling" of the *νόμος*.

Of the texts examined so far, only one spoke explicitly of the fulfilment of the Law (Jn 7,21-23) and one of the fulfilment of the *λόγος*, written in the Law (Jn 10,34-35). There is one other text which speaks of the *λόγος* written in the Law being "fulfilled": Jn 15,25. Is to speak of the fulfilment of the Law and to speak of the fulfilment of the *γραφή* or *λόγος* written in the Law one and the same thing for Jn?

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remains that the words of the Jews signify, directly, that they are asking for Jesus' death or execution in general terms and that there is no *direct* reference to the *manner* in which Jesus would die.

<sup>59</sup> Jn 18,32 refers back to 12,33. The words of Jesus contained in 12,32 are paraphrased by the crowd as a *δεῖ ὑψωθῆναι* and the *δεῖ*, as the context indicates, expresses the sovereign freedom with which Jesus wills to accomplish what the Father requires of him in order to bring to realization his salvific design.

<sup>60</sup> The question has already been raised at 7,17.19, where the will of God and the Law were correlated. See above, pp. 130-138.

a) *The fulfilment of the Law and the fulfilment of the γραφή or what "is written"*

The time has not yet come to try to determine the exact meaning νόμος has in Jn, but it is already possible to examine the relationship of the γραφή, γραφαί to the νόμος.

The connection of the root γραφ- with the νόμος in Jn is particularly evident, as can be gathered from an examination of 1,45b; 8,17a; 10,34b and 15,25a,b. A comparison of 7,23 with 10,34 and of 7,38.42 with 12,34 further shows that νόμος and γραφή are used interchangeably. The νόμος is the νόμος of Moses (1,17; 7,19.23); the γραφαί are the γραφαί of Moses (1,45; 5,39.46.47). *Insofar as νόμος stands for the Scriptures or a part thereof, γραφή, γραφαί and νόμος are synonymous.* To this extent it is clear that, *by fulfilling the Scripture(s), Jesus fulfills the Law.* Yet it is possible that νόμος has a nuance γραφή and γραφαί do not have.

Γραφή, γραφαί and γράμματα are never qualified by a ὑμῶν or αὐτῶν, as νόμος usually is.<sup>61</sup> It may be because of this slight difference in nuance that Jn never speaks *directly* of Jesus fulfilling the Law. The key verbs πληροῦν, οὐ ... λύειν, τελειοῦν are never found with the Law as subject or object. In the one case in which the Fourth Gospel speaks about the fulfilling of the Law (Jn 7,23 ἵνα μὴ λυθῇ ὁ νόμος Μωϋσέως), it is a Jewish practice which is directly in question—only indirectly is the activity of Jesus (insofar as it is symbolized by the practice of circumcising on the Sabbath) referred to as fulfilling the Law. The Johannine view is that the Scripture cannot be dissolved (viz., must be fulfilled)—οὐ δύναται λυθῆναι ἡ γραφή (10,35), rather than: οὐ δύναται λυθῆναι ὁ νόμος.<sup>62</sup> In the list of "witnesses" (Jn 5,30-39) the term νόμος is conspicuously absent, although OT revelation and the Scriptures are mentioned. Even at the end of the chapter, when a line of continuity is traced between Moses and Jesus, between the writings of Moses and the words of Jesus, the term νόμος is not to be found. It is belief in τὰ ἐκείνου γράμματα which is seen as leading to Jesus.

The reason for this (if we may be allowed to anticipate a point

<sup>61</sup> Cf. 7,51; 8,17; 10,34; 15,25; (18,31).

<sup>62</sup> Mt (5,17) expresses himself differently: μὴ νομίσητε ὅτι ἦλθον καταλῦσαι τὸν νόμον ... οὐκ ἦλθον καταλῦσαι ἀλλὰ πληρῶσαι. The verse was composed by Mt (cf. G. Barth, *art. cit.*, 60-66).

which will be discussed further on)<sup>63</sup> is that νόμος is an ambivalent term and retains a "negative" connotation even though Jn presents Jesus as the fulfilment of the Law. The γραφή, γραφαί, on the contrary, have no such negative connotation. Hence Jn prefers to speak of Jesus fulfilling the Law by saying that he fulfills what is written in the Law. The nuance, however, is very slight and should not be overstressed.

The γραφή or λόγος written in the Law is an integral part of the Law for Jn (and Christians). He consequently gives a prominent place to the idea that in Jesus and his ministry "the Scriptures are fulfilled". This presentation is not proper to Jn; the prophetic value of the Scriptures and their fulfilment in Christ is one of the main tenets of primitive Christianity.<sup>64</sup> What is noteworthy is that "the Scripture was fulfilled", as an expression which indicates the "heilsgeschichtliche" realization and fulfilment of the OT prophecies in Jesus and his ministry,<sup>65</sup> is found only in Jn among the later writings of the NT.<sup>66</sup> Mk, Mt and Lk are the only other NT writers who use πληροῦν in conjunction with the realization of an OT "prophecy" by Jesus.<sup>67</sup> The expression ἵνα πληρωθῇ + OT quotation is, surprisingly enough, found neither in Paul, nor in Hebrews and, among the evangelists, it is only Mt who uses it frequently.<sup>68</sup> The earliest appearance of the formula subsequently to the Gospels is in Hegessipus. The formula is not used by Barnabas, Justin or by the Apocryphal gospels (except the Pseudo-Matthaei). Bernard, to whom we owe these interesting observations,<sup>69</sup> concludes that Jn and Mt use the formula because it is "peculiarly Jewish". The conclusion

<sup>63</sup> See below, pp. 514ff.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Schelkle, *op. cit.*, 81ff; Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* (Fontana Books, 1965), *passim*, but esp. 126ff.

<sup>65</sup> On this, cf. G. Delling, *TWNT* VI, art. πληρόω, 293, 45ff.

<sup>66</sup> The ἐπληρώθη ἡ γραφή of Jas 2,33 does not refer to the fulfilment of the Scriptures in Jesus, but to Gen 15,6 being fulfilled in Gen 22,16f. Jn uses the expression at 12,38; 13,18; 15,25; 17,12; 19,24.36; 19,28 (τελειοῦν). To which one could add Jn 18,9.32 (the "word" of Jesus is treated as "scripture").

<sup>67</sup> Mk uses the expression but once (14,49); Lk uses it at 4,21; 24,44; Act 1,16; (3,18); 13,27. Cf. further (with τελεῖν) Lk 18,31; Act 13,29. For Mt see the following note.

<sup>68</sup> The formula of Mt is ἵνα (ὅπως) πληρωθῇ τὸ ρηθέν ... : 1,22; 2,15.17.23; 4,14; (5,17); 8,17; 12,17; 13,35; 21,4; 26,54.56; 27,9. Ἴνα πληρωθῇ ... (ἡ γραφή, τὰ γεγραμμένα) is not found in Lk, who prefers to formulate with δεῖ πληρωθῆναι (24,44; Act 1,16). Mk has ἵνα πληρωθῶσιν αἱ γραφαί once (14,49).

<sup>69</sup> Comm., clf.



seems warranted. At any rate, both Jn and Mt seem to wish to bring out, more than the other evangelists, the line of continuity between the OT and the NT—although the perspective of Mt is not quite the same as that of Jn.<sup>70</sup>

As analysis of the use Jn makes of the OT goes beyond the purpose and scope of this dissertation,<sup>71</sup> but the theme of the fulfilment of the Scriptures is relevant to our topic insofar as the *νόμος* and the Scriptures (*ἡ γραφή, αἱ γραφαί*) are, to a great extent, co-extensive terms.

b) *The Scriptures (νόμος) are fulfilled in Jesus*

At Jn 5,37-39 and 45-47, OT revelation and the Scriptures were presented as rendering "testimony" to Jesus, and Moses was said to have written about him. A line of continuity was traced between belief in Moses and his writings and belief in Jesus and his words. God's revelation, prior to Jesus' coming, was thereby given *a prophetic function*. For Jn, the OT pointed to Jesus; from the OT it was possible to show that Jesus is the one about whom Moses and the prophets wrote. In keeping with this evaluation of the OT, Jn uses OT quotations as milestones in his Gospel. The OT thus fulfills its prophetic role; it speaks about the person of Jesus and highlights the vital moments of his work and mission.

John the Baptist announces the coming of Jesus, as foretold by Isaiah (Jn 1,24 = Is 40,3); the cleansing of the Temple (Jn 2,17-22) fulfills the words of Ps 69,10; Jesus, the "bread of life", was prefigured in the manna (Jn 6,31 = Ex 16,4.15; Ps 78,24); those who are drawn to him and his teaching fulfill the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah (Jn 6,45 = Is 54,13; Jer 31,34). The rivers of living water, the gift of the Spirit and the revelation Jesus brings, are the realization of what had been foretold by the prophets (Jn 7,37.38 = Is 43,19-20; 44,3; 55,1-2; 58,11; Zech 14,8; Jer 2,13; 17,13; cf. also Prov 18,4). Jesus' entry into Jerusalem had been prophetically alluded to in the OT writings (Jn 12,14f = Zech 9,9; Zeph 3,14-16; Gen 49,11) and the acclamation with which he is greeted

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<sup>70</sup> Mt, if Barth (*art. cit.*, 153) is correct, is fighting against Hellenistic libertinism and against Rabbinical Judaism (*ibid.*, 88). He emphasizes that the *whole* Law must be kept, although it must be correctly (the norm is the precept of love) interpreted. This is not the Johannine view, as we hope to show.

<sup>71</sup> This topic has not yet been subjected to a thorough study. The work of E. D. Freed (*Old Testament Quotations in the Gospel of John* (Leiden, 1965)) leaves much to be desired because it almost completely neglects the theological aspect (notwithstanding what is said in the Prolegomena, p. IX!).

by the people was already to be found in these writings (Jn 12,13 = Ps 118,25-26; 20,10).

Jesus had met with rejection. This too had been foretold by the Scriptures. The unbelief of the Jews (Jn 12,38 = Is 53,1; Jn 12,39-40 = Is 6,9-10) as well as their unmotivated hatred (Jn 15,25 = Ps 35,19; 69,5; 119,161) had been predicted. Even the betrayal of Judas and his fate had been foreseen (Jn 13,18 = Ps 41,10; Jn 17,12 = Prov 24,22; Is 57,4).

It is especially in the Passion that the prophetic value of the OT stands out. The parting of the garments (Jn 19,24 = Ps 22,19), the thirst of Jesus (Jn 19,28 = Ps 69,22; 63,2), the breaking of the legs of all except Jesus (Jn 19,36 = Ex 12,46; Num 9,12; Ps 34,21) and the piercing of the side (Jn 19,37 = Zech 12,10) had all been referred to in the OT.

As for the person of Jesus, the Scriptures had said that he would be of the seed of David (Jn 7,42 = Mic 5,1; 2 Sam 5,2; 7,12; Ps 89,4-5.36-37; 18,51, etc.), had justified his calling himself "Son of God" (Jn 10,34 = Ps 82,6) and had said that he would remain forever (Jn 12,34 = Ps 89,37).

The prophetic function of the OT in the Fourth Gospel is hardly limited to these *explicit references* to the OT. OT motives and allusions have been woven into the fabric of the Gospel<sup>72</sup> with such skill that it is at times difficult to distinguish the old from the new. One has only to think of the prominent place Wisdom motives and Exodus typology have in the Fourth Gospel!

The question of the use Jn makes of the OT and the manner in which he sees the Scriptures fulfilled in Jesus, we have said, cannot be considered here. We must limit ourselves to the texts which are of immediate relevance to our topic. Within this restricted horizon, however, the idea of "fulfilment" plays a major role.

The theme of fulfilment of what is written in the OT (Law) made its appearance in just about every text analyzed so far.

The Sabbath question (Jn 5; 9) culminated in the idea of "fulfilment" expressed at Jn 7,21-23. The activity of Jesus appeared as that which was prefigured by the precept of circumcision contained in the Law and that to which it tended.

The "blasphemous" claim made by Jesus of being the Son of God was shown to be justified on the basis of the Law and our examination of the reasoning contained in Jn 10,34-36 brought out the "prophetic" nature of the words, "I said, you are gods", and the manner in which Jn sees them fulfilled in Jesus and those who believe on him.

The teaching-revelation of Jesus, considered contrary to the Law by the Jews, was presented by Jn as setting forth and surpassing (i.e., fulfilling) the traditional teaching of Moses and his disciples (Jn 7,45-49; 9,24-34; 7,14-18) and as realizing the "prophecy" *ἔσονται πάντες διδασκοὶ θεοῦ* (Jn 6,45). As a result of this, the acknowledgement of Jesus and his teaching as the (final) revelation of God meant

<sup>72</sup> Cf. C. K. Barrett, "The OT in the Fourth Gospel", *JTS* 48 (1947) 155-169.

to be disposed to "do the will of God" and to "do the Law" (Jn 7,17.19). On the other hand, the rejection of Jesus was considered a violation of the Law and its stipulations (Jn 7,19.51).

Jesus' self-revelation is guaranteed as "truthful" by what has been revealed in the past, both at Sinai and in the Scriptures, because Jesus brings the "life" the Scriptures promised but could not give (Jn 5,31-40). As the "fulfilment" of what was written about him, belief in Jesus should be the outcome and consummation of belief in Moses and in his writings (Jn 5,45-47). Moreover, the "two witnesses" required by the Law are present in an eminent manner in the case of Jesus—the Law is fulfilled on a higher level (Jn 8,12-20).

At Jn 1,45-49 the "true Israelite" was presented as the one who sees the Torah fulfilled in Jesus and confesses him as the one about whom Moses wrote.

The theme of the fulfilment of the OT (Law) will reappear again when we examine the typological character Jn gives to the "bread from heaven" and to the "water of Jacob's well" and the manner in which he uses the "nomistic" terms *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς, τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον; ποιεῖν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ* and *ἐργάζεσθαι τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ*.

But it is the death of Jesus which constitutes *the* locus of the *πληρωθῆναι* of the *γραφή* and of the Law.

c) *The Scriptures (νόμος) are fulfilled in an eminent manner in the death of Jesus*

Not only is the death of Jesus put under the sign of what is written in the Law, but even the events which lead up to it: the betrayal of Judas and the hatred of the Jews.

The unbelief of the Jews, which is at the root of their hatred for Jesus and his word, is seen in Jn 12,38 and 12,39-40 as the "fulfilment of the word of Isaiah the prophet" (*ἵνα ὁ λόγος Ἡσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου πληρωθῇ* 12,38). Jn goes so far as to say that the Jews could not believe because of this word (12,39). Their unbelief is there *so that* (*ἵνα*) what Isaiah had spoken about Jesus might be fulfilled.<sup>73</sup> At 15,25 the hatred of the Jews is recalled in a context very similar to that of 12,36-37. This time it is Jesus who recalls his "words" and "works" (15,22-24). Notwithstanding these, the Jews have hated him. But this is *demand*ed "in order that the word written in their Law be fulfilled".

<sup>73</sup> The *ἵνα πληρωθῇ*... in Jn belongs to what E. Stauffer has rightly called "theologische Finalsätze" (*TWNT* III, art. *ἵνα*, 324f; 327ff). This use of *ἵνα* is frequent in the writings of the NT which present a rather developed "theological" synthesis: Jn and the Pauline and Deutero-Pauline Epistles (*ibid.*, 325, 1ff).

Jn gives greater emphasis than any other Gospel to the figure of Judas and to his betrayal (Jn 6,64.71; 12,4; 13,2.11.21.26.29; 18,2.3.5). Judas is the one who was to betray Jesus. His name is almost invariably coupled with the idea of betrayal; he is *ὁ παραδύσων αὐτόν* or *ὁ μέλλων αὐτόν παραδιδόναι* (cf. 6,64.71; 12,4; 13,2.11.21; 18,2.5). But Jn is careful to point out that Jesus "knew" this from the beginning (6,64) and that, notwithstanding this (because of this?), Jesus chose him (6,70; 13,18). In fact, it was necessary that Judas, one of the Twelve, betray Jesus. The fate of Judas, a direct result of his betrayal, was necessary *ἵνα ἡ γραφή πληρωθῇ* (17,12c).<sup>74</sup>

If the events which lead up to the death of Jesus are described as part and parcel of the divine plan, already foretold in the Law, his death is viewed as the fulfilment of the Law in a special sense.

The sense of the *γραφή* quoted at Jn 2,17 is already a probable reference to Jesus' death: Jesus' zeal will lead him to his death. The reference to Ex 16,4.15 and Ps 78,24, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat" (Jn 6,31) cannot be dissociated entirely from the death of Jesus (cf. 6,51), even if the reference to the Eucharist is "secondary". The rivers of living water (Jn 7,37-38) are another case in which there is a reference to the death of Jesus. Even if v. 39 does not represent the primary meaning of vv. 37-38, this verse connects the gift of the living water with the gift of the Spirit which results from Jesus' death (cf. 19,30.34). Again the *γραφή* is fulfilled by the death of Jesus.

When one adds all these references to the fulfilment of the Scriptures in the death of Jesus to Jn 19,24.28.36.37 and to the other texts (12,34; 3,14) we will now consider, one has the impression that the bulk of the OT references serves to show that the Law is fulfilled in an eminent degree in the death of Jesus.

#### aa) *Jn 3,14*

The first explicit reference to the death-exaltation of Jesus relates it to the *ὑψωθῆναι* of the brazen serpent by Moses in the desert (Num 21,8f). The comparison is not worked out in detail, but two aspects of the death of Jesus stand out: the *ὑψωθῆναι* and the *πιστεύειν εἰς αὐτόν* (as the crucified-exalted Lord). Num 21,8f in

<sup>74</sup> The *γραφή* could refer to Ps 41,10; Prov 24,22a (LXX) or some other OT text, or to the words of Jesus (6,70f). Cf. Freed, *op. cit.*, 96-98.

the LXX (or MT) has neither *ὑψοῦν* nor *πιστεύειν*. The terms are less important than the image conveyed by the reference to Num 21,8f. Moses is told to make a fiery serpent and to set it on a pole (שׂים אֹתוֹ עַל נֹס; καὶ θές αὐτόν ἐπὶ σημείου). The "standard" (נֹס or σημεῖον) upon which the serpent was "set" was certainly present in the mind of the evangelist, and the OT very often speaks about a "standard" (נֹס) being "lifted up" (נָשָׂא).<sup>75</sup> Indeed it is proper to a "standard" to be "lifted up". The lifting up of the "standard" in the OT is, furthermore, almost invariably associated with the "gathering" or "rallying" of people (cf. Is 5,26; 11,12; 13,2; 49,22; 62,10—comp. 49,22; Jer 4,(5).6; 50,2 (MT)—cf. 50,4ff; 51,27—comp. 51,12). What is even more interesting is that the lifting up of a standard is frequently associated with the "gathering in" of the dispersed children of God (cf. Is 11,12; 62,10—comp. 49,22; Jer 50,2 (MT)—comp. 50,4ff).

Jn has explicitly associated the "gathering in" of the "dispersed children of God" with Jesus' death at 11,50-52. In view of this association there can be little doubt that the same thought is present at 12,32. If Jn 3,14; 12,32 and 11,50-52 are considered together in the light of the passages of Isaiah and Jeremiah just quoted (and in the light of Bar 5,5!), it seems very probable that Jn considers the lifting up of Jesus on the cross (viz., into his glory) the *σημεῖον par excellence*,<sup>76</sup> which effects the gathering in of the children of God, which makes men children of God—through the faith which is engendered by the "Exalted" in those who "look upon" him—and unites them into one.<sup>77</sup>

We may conclude that, although Num 21,8f does not mention the "lifting up" of the serpent, it was very much present in Jn's mind. One might even ask whether Jn is not quoting the Targums, where Moses is said to have "placed the serpent on an elevated place" or "suspended" it.<sup>78</sup>

The second term (*πιστεύειν*) is also absent in the LXX and MT, but we find the verbs *ἰδεῖν* and *ἐπιβλέπειν*. Those who "looked upon"

<sup>75</sup> נֹס is almost invariably combined with נָשָׂא in the Heb. Bible: Is 5,26; 11,12; 13,2; 18,3; Jer 4,6; 50,2 (MT); 51,12.27. Is 49,22 and 62,10 use the Hifil of רָוַם.

<sup>76</sup> In this sense: J. P. Charlier, "La notion de signe dans le IV<sup>e</sup> évangile", *RSPT* 43 (1959) 434-448.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 14-31; esp. 26-31.

<sup>78</sup> Such are the readings of Neofiti I and the Pseudo-Jonathan.

the serpent were saved. Since Jn takes the lifting up of the serpent as an "anschauliches Bild" and associates it as such with the lifting up of the Son of man, the substitution of πιστεύειν to ὁρᾶν is of little consequence,<sup>79</sup> especially since 1) the verbs of seeing in Jn are closely associated with faith, 2) the "looking upon" the serpent was already interpreted in a "spiritual" sense by Wisd 16,6f and Rosh-Hashanah 3,8.

1) The πιστεύειν εἰς αὐτόν of Jn 3,14 should be viewed in conjunction with what is said at Jn 19,37 (see below) and with the emphasis Jn lays on "seeing" as an act which cannot be dissociated from "believing".

2) As a reaction against any possible idolatric inferences both Wisd 16,6f and Rosh-Hashanah 3,8 insisted that it was not the serpent who healed but God (his word) and, correlatively, that it was not the act of looking upon the serpent which healed, but the act of spiritual subjection to God (and his Law).

There are indications that Jn might have been thinking of Wisd 16,6f in writing 3,14ff. Not only does the σωθῆ of Jn 3,17 recall the σωτηρία of Wisd 16,7, but the πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων (= ὁ κόσμος) of Jn 3,16-17 recalls the ὁ πάντων σωτήρ of Wisd 16,7. To these analogies, pointed out by Thüsing,<sup>80</sup> we wish to add that the idea of life or death, seen as a result of one's attitude to Jesus (ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτόν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ' ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον) and which corresponds to Jesus' power of saving and "judging" (οὐ ... ἵνα κρίνῃ τὸν κόσμον, ἀλλ' ἵνα σωθῇ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ; comp. 5,21), is very much present in Wisd 16,14 (οὐ γὰρ ζωῆς καὶ θανάτου ἐξουσίαν ἔχεις).

It is particularly the analogy of Jn 3,14f with Wisd 16,6f concerning the manner in which salvation is obtained and the agent of salvation which is striking. Wisd 16,6f conceives the looking upon the (exalted) serpent as a turning towards God (viz., his Law); it is God (viz., his word) who saves. The thought is given ulterior development in Rosh-Hashanah 3,8: to look towards the serpent is to subject one's heart to God—it is he who saves. Similarly, in Jn, the looking upon the Crucified is to believe on him (to subject one's heart to him)—it is

<sup>79</sup> To say that the ἰδῶν of Num 21,8 (LXX) "ist in πιστεύειν umgeformt" and that "damit ist sein verborgener Sinn klargestellt" (Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 7) is exact, providing one also qualifies that the verbs of "seeing" in Jn are closely associated with faith (although πιστεύειν would seem to be a stronger term).

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 7, n. 16.

the crucified-exalted Jesus who gives life. Jn 3,14 would be an ulterior development of Wisd 16,6f (and Rosh-Hashanah). Faith is not directed directly towards Jesus, but to the Crucified (to Jesus lifted up on the cross). The "symbol" is not done away with (the crucifixion, the cross remains a *σημεῖον*), although salvation is present in the "sign" itself (as opposed to the elevated serpent, which does not give life, which is a pure "sign") since it is the one who has life in himself (as Son of God) who is lifted up and who in this very act gives life to others.

If Jn was thinking of Wisd 16,6f, it could be that he was establishing yet another contrast between an event of the wilderness (such as the "bread of life") and the "realization" in Jesus of what it symbolized. The serpent was a *σύμβολον σωτηρίας* which reminded the "chosen people" of the "commandment of the Law" (*ἐντολὴ νόμου σου*). He who turned towards it was not saved by what he saw (the symbol), but by God (*διὰ σέ τὸν πάντων σωτῆρα* 16,7). In Wisd 16,12, which is parallel to 16,7, it is the "word of God" (the Law)<sup>81</sup> which heals or saves (*ὁ σός, κύριε, λόγος ὁ πάντας ἰώμενος*). The serpent is a "symbol" of salvation in that it is a "reminder" of the Law; God and his "word" (the Law) are the salvific powers. In ultimate analysis: looking at the serpent means to turn to (cf. 16,7 *ὁ ἐπιστραφεὶς*) the Law (cf. 16,1.11) and the turning to the Law effects salvation—God or "his word" (the Law) saves those who turn to him (viz., to his Law). The thought in Rosh-Hashanah is very similar. It was not the serpent who killed or kept alive. When the Israelites looked up and subjected their hearts to their heavenly Father, they were healed. The commandment of the Law is not mentioned, but subjection to God was not conceivable apart from subjection to the Law. To "cast off the yoke of the Lord", to refuse subjection to him, meant to go against the Covenant Law.<sup>82</sup>

Did Jn have the "symbolic" interpretation of Wisd 16,6ff in mind? If, for Jn, looking up to the serpent symbolized subjecting one's heart to God (viz., remembering the commandment of the Law), the reference to Num 21,8ff is perfectly "ad hoc". In the Fourth Gospel, *πιστεύειν εἰς Ἰησοῦν* replaces belief in the Law and in Moses (cf. Jn 5,45-47). The Israelites were saved by the "word of God",

<sup>81</sup> See what is said on the equivalence Law—"word of God" in the OT, pp. 403ff.

<sup>82</sup> Büchler, *op. cit.*, 45-87; 77.

the Law (by God himself on the condition that they subjected themselves to him and to his law); the new Israel is saved by God in the Son (on the condition that they look upon the Crucified with faith).

The interpretation we have afforded remains somewhat hypothetical. What is obvious is the link Jn establishes between an event of Exodus and the crowning event of Christ's life and that the point of comparison is not only the *ὑψωθῆναι* but also the looking upon the uplifted serpent and Jesus—with the result this has for those who do so: the gift of life. The *lifting up* of the serpent becomes a *τύπος* for that of Christ, the *gazing upon* the serpent a *τύπος* for the looking upon Christ.<sup>83</sup> The two events cannot be placed on the same level. The lifting up of Jesus is what was symbolized by the lifting up of the serpent. Looking upon the uplifted serpent gave life to those who had been bitten and were doomed to death; the uplifted Jesus gives eternal life to all who look upon him with faith. The latter is the salvific event of which the former was but a figure.

These thoughts are not voiced “expressis verbis” at Jn 3,14f, but one of the dominating themes of the Fourth Gospel is that Jesus alone brings life and salvation—whatever may have been the nature of the *σωτηρία* of which ancient Israel benefited (Jn does not reflect upon this)<sup>84</sup>—and that he does this through his whole *ἔργον* and through his death in particular.

At Jn 3,14 we have a first presentation of the *ὑψωθῆναι* of Jesus as the fulfilment of an event foreshadowed in the Law.

#### bb) Jn 12,34

The text, which is related both to Jn 3,14 and 18,32, uses *ὑψοῦν* and *νόμος* in conjunction with each other. At 18,32 the evangelist employs the formula *ἵνα ὁ λόγος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ πληρωθῇ ὃν εἶπεν*. It is exactly the same formula we find at 18,9. Both introductory formulas express the conviction that the “word of Jesus” is to be placed on

<sup>83</sup> We believe that the reservations on this point expressed by L. Goppelt (*Typos. Die typologische Deutung des Alten Testaments im Neuen* (Darmstadt, r.p. 1969), 220-221) are unfounded.

<sup>84</sup> The statement of Hahn (*art. cit.*, 71; comp. 73) that “die Anschauung von einer Heilsverwirklichung im Alten Bund radikal bestritten (wird)” in the Fourth Gospel (the specific reference is to Jn 6,32ff) cannot be defended. See what has been said about Jn 5,37 (above) and what is said about “the bread of life” (below).



the same footing as the "word of God" in the OT.<sup>85</sup> The same divine authority is behind both; they both have a "heilsgeschichtlicher" character and must both be "fulfilled" with the same inevitability.

The λόγος of Jesus which Jn sees fulfilled at 18,32 is that pronounced at 12,32 and taken up by the crowd at 12,34. It is the "word" according to which the ὑψωθῆναι of the Son of man is presented as a δέι.

Significantly enough, the δέι ὑψωθῆναι, as at 3,14, is again related to the Law, this time explicitly. The formula ἡμεῖς ἠκούσαμεν ἐκ τοῦ νόμου is singular in Jn, but it corresponds to οὐχ ἡ γραφή εἶπεν; of Jn 7,42 (a text which is related to 12,34—see below). The correspondence is manifest.<sup>86</sup> The Jews "heard from the Law" what "the Scripture (Law) said".

The precise text of the Law to which the Jews are referring is rather obscure.<sup>87</sup> The texts usually adduced (Ps 109(110),4; Is 9,6; Ez 37,25; Dan 7,4) all have a messianic content and speak of an eternal reign, but μένειν, which is the key word in Jn 12,34, is absent.<sup>88</sup> The expression μένειν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα is often found in the OT, but only in one case is the text in which it is found "messianic": Ps 88 (89),37. The Psalm was given a messianic interpretation in the Rabbinic sources<sup>89</sup> and in the NT<sup>90</sup> as well as in Ps Sol 17. Van

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Delling, *TWNT* VI, 295, 25ff.

<sup>86</sup> 'H γραφή can also be referred to by Jn as ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ αὐτῶν γεγραμμένος (15,25). Consequently, the expression ἠκούσαμεν ἐκ τοῦ νόμου has the same meaning as ἡ γραφή (= ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐν τῷ νόμῳ γεγραμμένος) εἶπεν (7,42; comp. 7,38). The only difference is that the verb ἀκούειν is used instead of λέγειν and that Jn 12,34 furthermore equates ὁ νόμος with ἡ γραφή or ὁ λόγος ὁ τῷ νόμῳ γεγραμμένος (the equivalence once again shows that ἡ γραφή and ὁ νόμος are practically synonymous). Comp. further Jn 7,23 with 10,34; 7,38.42 with 12,34.

<sup>87</sup> So obscure that Nestle's text marks only εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, Aland-Black's nothing at all, as a direct OT quotation and, more surprisingly, Freed (*op. cit.*) does not consider Jn 12,34.

<sup>88</sup> The objection of the crowd is not so much a reference to the eternal reign of the Messiah as it is to his *remaining* forever. Jesus has spoken of his ὑψωθῆναι. The Jews have understood that he is speaking of his death and object that, according to the Law, the Christ is supposed to remain forever. Cf. W. C. van Unnik, "The Quotation of the OT in John 12,34", *NovT* 3 (1959) 174-179, 175 and 177.

<sup>89</sup> Van Unnik (*art. cit.*, 178, n. 2) refers to the messianic interpretation of Ps 89 and quotes the Register of *Str.-Bill.* under Ps 89! Among the many references given there, there are a few which substantiate the messianic interpretation given to Ps 89, although it was hardly a messianic Psalm in the sense in which Ps 2 was. Cf. Ex R 19 (81d)—*Str.-Bill.*, II, 426 (ad Jn 3,16), 2; Midr Ps 5, § 4 (26b)—*Str.-Bill.*, II, 338; Midr

Unnik<sup>91</sup> has had the merit of proving beyond reasonable doubt that this is the text to which Jn is alluding. It reads : τὸ σπέρμα αὐτοῦ (Δαβὶδ) εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα μένει. It is true that τὸ σπέρμα αὐτοῦ is found in the Psalm rather than ὁ Χριστός (Jn 12,34), but Jn 7,42, the text which offers the closest analogy to the ἡκούσαμεν ἐκ τοῦ νόμου (cf. above) and in which (as at 12,34) the Jews are raising dogmatic objections based upon the Law against the messianic claims of Jesus, has the Jews say that ἡ γραφὴ εἶπεν ὅτι ὁ Χριστός (v. 41) will be ἐκ τοῦ σπέρματος Δαβὶδ. It was common to speak of the Messiah as the "seed of David" (cf. Gen R 97; Gal 3,16).

The Jews take exception to the δεῖ ὑπωθῆναι in the name of the Law. They rightly understand the words as affirming the necessity of Christ's death (on the cross); what they fail to understand is that, in its ambiguity, the ὑποῦν already gives to the death of Christ (on the cross) a unique character, which marks it off from any other death. Jn obviously did not share the views of Cerinthus, according to which Christ remained without suffering and death, but he does consider the death of Jesus as somewhat of a transfiguration. Although the passion and death of Christ are not a triumphal march into the glory of the Father, the events are viewed in retrospect, in the light of the glorification.<sup>92</sup> In view of this, Jn can consider the death of the Lord as an act of his ἐξουσία : he has the power to lay down his life and the power to take it up again (10,18). The Father has given the Son the power to have life in himself (5,26). This means not only that he has the power to give life to others, but that death has no power over him.

Jn 8,53 is particularly valuable for interpreting Jn 12,34. It affords the passage from the affirmation that those who keep the word of Jesus will not taste death (v. 52) to the idea of Christ's supra-temporal existence (v. 58).<sup>93</sup> What is curious about v. 53 is that it does not follow very well upon v. 52. At v. 52 Jesus promises that those who keep his word will not taste death; at v. 53 the Jews object : "Abraham and the prophets died", they repeat the words of Jesus (ἐάν τις τὸν λόγον μου τηρήσῃ, θάνατον κ.τ.λ.) and add : "Are you greater than our Father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died?" The thought has made a leap and something

Ps 18, § 5 (68<sup>b</sup>)—*Str.-Bill.*, I, 8; Pesiq R 36 (161<sup>a</sup>)—*Str.-Bill.*, II, 348; Jalammedenu (Jalqut Schim I, § 47, end)—*Str.-Bill.*, I, 8.

<sup>90</sup> Act 2,30; 13,22; Lk 1,51; Apoc 1,5; 3,14.

<sup>91</sup> *Art. cit.*

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 310.

<sup>93</sup> See what has been said above, pp. 62f.

has been left unsaid : if the word of Jesus can preserve from death, it is because Jesus himself has power over death. Jn is audacious enough to have the Jews affirm that Jesus cannot die. Jesus, of course, will and does die, but his death does not take away from the fact that he is above death—it rather manifests his power over death (the power already foreshadowed in the raising of Lazarus —“I am the resurrection and the life”).

The Jews understood the *δεῖ ὑψωθῆναι* correctly, but have stopped at the one aspect : Christ must die. They have not perceived the second aspect of the *δεῖ ὑψωθῆναι* : Christ must be exalted. We are dealing with another example of Johannine irony. The *ὑψωθῆναι* of Jesus is more than his simple death on the cross ; it marks his return to the Father and gives rise to his eternal reign as the exalted and glorified Lord.<sup>94</sup> Once again the Law is fulfilled in an eminent manner.

#### *Jn 19,24.28.36.37*

A comparison of the Johannine account of the crucifixion and death of Jesus with the Synoptics reveals that Jn shows a more marked interest for the OT. Whereas in the Synoptic accounts we have no *specific* quotation of the OT,<sup>95</sup> in Jn there are four such specific quotations (19,24.28.36.37).

The OT is quoted by the Fourth Gospel from a well-defined point of view : that of stressing the fulfilment of the Scriptures in the crucifixion and death of Jesus.<sup>96</sup> All four quotations are introduced by a “fulfilment formula”, either by *ἵνα ἡ γραφή πληρωθῇ* (19,24.36.37) or by *ἵνα τελειωθῇ ἡ γραφή* (19,28).

#### cc) *Jn 19,24*

The event recounted here is found in all four Gospels.<sup>97</sup> This is

<sup>94</sup> Thüsing, *ibid.*, 31.

<sup>95</sup> Even in the account of the crucifixion and death of Jesus given by Mt there are no “fulfilment” formulas, notwithstanding the predilection he has for such formulas. The absence is so noticeable that a few MSS introduced a *ἵνα πληρωθῇ* ... at Mt 27,35 (Δ, Θ, etc.). A similar phenomenon is visible at Mk 15,28 (K, L, Θ, etc.).

<sup>96</sup> If Jn, whose references to the OT are usually more allusive (and elusive) than those of the Synoptics, used introductory formulas and quoted the OT explicitly in connection with the death of Jesus, it was because it was of vital interest to him that the death of Jesus be seen as the fulfilment of the OT. The reason for this, in its turn, is that the salvific value of Jesus' death is theologically more developed in Jn and seen as the source of life—in the gift of which the OT (Law) finds its fulfilment.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. Mk 15,24 (= Mt 27,35; Lk 23,34).

somewhat surprising, since the division of the garments of the executed among the executioners was an accepted practice of the time.<sup>98</sup> Even as a point of biographical interest, the fact would hardly be worth mentioning.<sup>99</sup>

In narrating this event, the Synoptics all refer to Ps 22,19(18). The wording of the Synoptics is so close to that of the Psalm that the reference would immediately be recognized by someone acquainted with the OT, even though the Psalm verse is not quoted *verbatim*. The event was obviously seen as the fulfilment of this OT "prophecy".

Jn is much more articulate than the other evangelists. To begin with, Ps 22,19(18) is quoted *verbatim*, according to the LXX version.<sup>100</sup> Secondly, the quotation is introduced by a "fulfilment formula"—something we have only in a few versions of Mt 27,35.

The most notable divergence between Jn and the Synoptics is that Jn "duplicates".<sup>101</sup> What in the Synoptics and in the Psalm is described as a single action with a single object, becomes in Jn two distinct actions with two different objects. In Ps 22,19 we have a synonymous parallelism: one action with a single object is described twice in different terms—dividing the clothes, casting lots for the clothing. Jn has the soldiers divide the clothes (*τὰ ἱμάτια*) and cast lots for the tunic (*ὁ χιτῶν* = *ὁ ἱματισμός*) or undergarment. The reason for the latter action is that the *χιτῶν* was all of one piece and could not be divided without being torn. What led to this "duplication"? Did Jn misinterpret the Psalm and "invent" two acts with distinct objects to correspond to the two members of the Psalm verse, or did he start from the historical fact (that the soldiers first divided the garments and then cast lots for the tunic) and see the two separate events already distinguished in the wording of the Psalm? Opinions are divided among exegetes,<sup>102</sup> but the latter view

<sup>98</sup> Cf. Blinzler, *Prozess*, 369, n. 47.

<sup>99</sup> M. Dibelius ("Die atl. Motive in der Leidensgeschichte des Petrus- und Johannes-evangeliums", in: *Botschaft und Geschichte*, I (Tübingen, 1953), 221-248; 230) speaks of "novellistische Umbildung des atl. Motivs" due to "Freude ... am Erzählen". But when Jn is "detailed", there is usually some theological (viz., symbolic) aforethought.

<sup>100</sup> The LXX translates the MT accurately except for the verbs, which are in the aor. instead of the pres. and fut.

<sup>101</sup> A similar peculiarity is to be found in Mt 21,25.

<sup>102</sup> W. Bauer, Loisy, Bultmann, Barrett, believe that Jn misunderstood the Ps and "invented" two actions to match; Lagrange, Bernard, Hoskyns, Brown (1920), believe the "double" action is historical and that Jn saw in this an exact fulfilment of the

seems more plausible to the writer.<sup>103</sup> In any case, it is obvious that Jn gives great importance to the exact fulfilment of what was written in the Law.

Thus, the three features<sup>104</sup> which distinguish Jn 19,24 from the Synoptic parallels may be reduced to *the avowed intention of marking the exact fulfilment of the Scripture in a way which could not be more explicit*.

This intention is sufficient to explain why Jn describes the event in such detail, but it is possible that there was an additional motive: the symbolic meaning the *χιτών* might have had for him. If the tunic had symbolic value for Jn, the manner in which he presented the scene, distinguishing carefully between the "clothing" and the "tunic", would serve the additional purpose of calling the reader's attention to the meaning of the "tunic" (viz., of its not being "torn").

Two interpretations are proposed: 1) A tunic of one piece was worn by the Jewish High Priest. Jn would be presenting Jesus as a High Priest.<sup>105</sup> 2) The tunic of one piece, which the soldiers do not tear, is a symbol for the unity of the Church.<sup>106</sup>

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words of the Ps. It should be noted that, even if Jn misunderstood the Ps, the details he gives need not be invented (see the following note). Behind the position adopted lies rather the basic question of the relationship of the NT to the OT "prophecies". Some assume that the "facts" were modified by the NT writers to suit the OT texts; but it is more probable that the "facts" were primordial and that the OT texts were searched out and quoted to bring out their significance.

<sup>103</sup> Not only does the assumption that "facts" are here being invented to suit a (misunderstanding of an) OT text seem questionable, but there are indications which speak against this. Lagrange justly points out that the reason given by Jn for the two distinct actions is quite plausible. Furthermore, were Jn "inventing" to suit the words of the Ps, he would have used *βάλλειν κλήρον* instead of the colloquial *λαγχάνειν* (litt.: "to obtain by lot"; in Jn "to cast lots") and should have used *ἱματισμός* rather than *χιτών* (which does not even correspond to the Heb. *לְבָשִׁת*). Rightly Lagrange, Brown (920).

<sup>104</sup> 1) Introductory formula; 2) verbatim quotation; 3) "double" action corresponding to the two members of the Ps verse.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. C. Spicq, "L'origine johannique de la conception du Christ-prêtre dans l'Épître aux Hébreux", in: *Aux sources de la tradition chrétienne* (Neuchâtel, 1950), 258-269; F.-M. Braun, "Quatre 'signes' johanniques de l'unité chrétienne", *NTS* 9 (1962-63) 147-155, 151f; J. Gnilka, "Die Erwartung des messianischen Hohenpriesters in den Schriften von Qumran und im NT", *RQ* 7 (1960) 395-426, 423. Loisy (876) and Lagrange express doubts about the *χιτών* as a designation of Jesus as the "souverain prêtre". Bernard and Bultmann (519, n. 10) reject any such allusion.

<sup>106</sup> The interpretation goes back to Cyprian (*De Unitate Ecclesiae* VII; *C.S.E.L.* 3,1; 215) and is still popular among exegetes (cf. Loisy, Lagrange, Hoskyns).

1) A seamless tunic belonged to the apparel of the High Priest and was called a *χιτών* in the LXX (Ex 28,4; Lev 16,4) as well as by Josephus.

Josephus describes the tunic of the High Priest at great length in terms that are not far removed from those of Jn: it is not composed of two pieces ... but was one whole, very long, piece, woven ... (ἔστι δ' ὁ χιτὼν οὗτος οὐκ ἐκ δυοῖν περιτημάτων ... φάρσος δ' ἐν ἐπίμηκες ὑφασμένον *Ant.* III, 161). Philo also gives an allegorical interpretation of the High Priest's tunic.<sup>107</sup> The importance given to the possession of the ornaments of the High Priest by both Jews and Romans is an indication of the significance they had.<sup>108</sup> When Agrippa I, in the year 43 A.D., wished to make Jonathan High Priest, Jonathan said, "It is enough for me to have once worn the holy vestment".<sup>109</sup> The vestments of the High Priest were inseparable from his office; he wore them not only during cultic ceremonies but even when he exercised important non-cultic functions.<sup>110</sup> The pontifical robe thus had a very special significance.

Are there any indications that Jn was trying to present Jesus as the new High Priest? The thought is found fully developed in Hebrews and Spicq<sup>111</sup> would have the idea derive from Jn. But the Fourth Gospel offers little to support such a theory,<sup>112</sup> even though Jesus is given some priestly traits. At Jn 10,36 and 17,19 Jesus speaks of "being sanctified" and of "sanctifying himself" and some authors<sup>113</sup> point out that it is priests and prophets who are "consecrated" or "sanctified" for a special task, so that the language is appropriate for the preparation of a priest. But one can also maintain that the reference is to Jesus as an "Opfer", for the sacrifice must also be "sanctified".<sup>114</sup> Jn 2,21f is less doubtful. Jesus becomes the centre of the new cult and the new community by substituting the temple with his body.

For metropolitan Judaism and for the Jews of the Diaspora, the

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<sup>107</sup> *De Fuga* XX, 110-112. The text is important because it shows that the tunic of the High Priest was given special importance and interpreted allegorically prior to Jn. Jn's view distinguishes itself from that of Philo (cf. Loisy, Lagrange, Barrett).

<sup>108</sup> Cf. Blinzler, *Prozess*, 160, n. 71.

<sup>109</sup> Josephus, *Ant.* XIX, 6, 4.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. Blinzler, *op. cit.*, 160, n. 71.

<sup>111</sup> *Art. cit.*

<sup>112</sup> See the reservations of Gnlika: Spicq goes too far when he concludes that "der johanneische Jesus trage durch und priesterliche Züge" (*art. cit.*, 425).

<sup>113</sup> Barrett (ad Jn 17,19); Brown (766).

<sup>114</sup> Cf. Gnlika, *art. cit.*, 424.

Temple was the principle of unity in virtue of the cult, which could be celebrated only in Jerusalem. This strong centralization also required a strongly centralized priesthood, and it was the honour and power given to the High Priest which made this possible. If Jesus is being presented as High Priest at Jn 19,24, this would be in perfect agreement with and would complete what was said at Jn 2,21f.<sup>115</sup>

When one recalls the Qumran doctrine of the two Messiahs,<sup>116</sup> one is tempted to say that Jn presented Jesus both as the Messianic King and as the Messianic High Priest. Yet, the Fourth Gospel itself does not furnish enough evidence to warrant such a statement and one can merely say that Jn has possibly given Jesus some priestly traits.

2) That the tunic of Jesus was all of one piece might serve to identify it as the tunic of the High Priest but, in view of the *μὴ σχίσωμεν αὐτόν*, it could also serve as an allusion to the unity of the community Jesus gathers about him. Jn often insists on the unifying power of Christ's death (10,15-16; 11,51-52; 17,11.21-23) and shows, on the contrary, that the Jews are divided as a result of Christ's revelation (7,43; 9,16; 10,19).

The two "symbolic" allusions would complement each other:<sup>117</sup> the tunic of one piece points to Jesus as the High Priest, who is the centre of a unified "flock"—the action of the soldiers underlines the necessity of preserving this unity. Again we are in the realm of the hypothetical and perhaps too much has been made of the *μὴ σχίσωμεν αὐτόν*. It is striking, however, that Lev 21,10 (comp. 10,6) forbade the High Priest to rend his clothes and that the allegory of Philo is based upon this.

We may conclude that both of the above-given interpretations are conjectural. Although nothing can be advanced against them,<sup>118</sup> they

<sup>115</sup> The connection has been pointed out by F.-M. Braun, *art. cit.*, 150-152.

<sup>116</sup> On the figure of the Messiah of Aaron in the writings of Qumran, cf. Gnika, *art. cit.*, 395-405.

<sup>117</sup> F.-M. Braun, *art. cit.*, has attempted to fuse the two interpretations into one.

<sup>118</sup> Bultmann (519, n. 10) remarks that Jn cannot be thinking of the tunic of the High Priest because, if the casting of the lots for the tunic could be a derogatory action symbolizing the abolishment of the Jewish High Priesthood, the Jewish High Priesthood would hardly be represented by the tunic of Jesus. Blinzler (*Prozess*, 369, n. 48) and Gnika (*art. cit.*, 423, n. 122) agree with Bultmann. But the objection of Bultmann is quite superficial. First, the point is not that the soldiers cast lots for the tunic but that they do not tear it. Second, the tunic is not directly a symbol of the Jewish High Priesthood, but of the High Priesthood as such. Third, it serves to indicate Jesus as

are far from certain. Should Jn have wished to present Jesus as the High Priest of the new Covenant, we would be dealing with another example of fulfilment: Jesus abolishes the High Priesthood of the Jews by becoming the new High Priest. However this may be, the parting of Jesus' garments fulfills what was written in the Law (about him).

### *Jn 19,36.37*

At the outset of this chapter,<sup>119</sup> we saw that the Jews do not enter the praetorium "so that they might not be defiled but might eat the Passover" (18,28) and that they ask that Jesus be removed from the cross "in order to prevent the bodies from remaining on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a great day)" (19,31). We spoke of the prescriptions of the Law which prompted this behaviour and pointed out that Jn was presenting the Jews as scrupulous followers of the Law. Yet, the irony the evangelist sees in this is certainly not the only reason which prompts him to write these details. Both incidents are connected with the Passover and thus allow Jn to point out that the Passover was imminent. We shall see the importance of the emphasis given by Jn to this chronological detail.

The request the Jews make to Pilate at 19,31 has another purpose as well. The Jews, who wish to fulfill the prescriptions of their Law with exactitude, bring about the fulfilment of the Law on a higher plane. As a result of their intervention, the side of Jesus is pierced and this fulfills the *γραφή* "Not a bone of him shall be broken" (19,36) and the other *γραφή* "They shall look on him whom they have pierced" (19,37). The death of Jesus is again presented as the Law's fulfilment, but one cannot stop here. It is not so much the *manner* of Jesus' death which is seen as the fulfilment of the Law as *his death itself*. The manner in which Jesus dies reveals the *theological significance of Jesus' death and it is this which is the fulfilment of the Law*.

### dd) *Jn 19,36*

The OT texts which come into question as possible sources for the

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the new High Priest who abolishes the Jewish High Priesthood—the relationship of the Jewish Priesthood to that of Jesus is not to be identified with the tunic and what happens to it.

<sup>119</sup> See above, pp. 309f.



Johannine quotation are: Ex 12,10 (LXX); Ex 12,46; Num 9,12; Ps 34(33),21. The question is of importance because, if Jn is quoting the Pentateuch, the reference at 19,36 is almost certainly to Jesus as the paschal lamb; if he is quoting Ps 34,21, the reference is to Jesus as the righteous sufferer.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to settle the question on a purely textual basis.

The form of the verb (3rd pers. sing. fut. pass.) is exactly that of Ps 34,21 (*συντριβήσεται*), but it does not agree with the Heb. of the Psalm, which has the Nifal perf. or Nifal part. fem. sing. On the contrary, at Ex 12,46 and Num 9,12 the verb is in the future in *both* Hebrew and Greek. Jn could have changed the future active to the future passive in order to make it appear as a prediction and have it refer specifically to Jesus. This would also account for the change to the third person. What is still more important: in Ex 12,10 (LXX) the verb is in the future middle 3rd pers. sing. (*συντρίβεται*).<sup>120</sup> Jn would simply have substituted the passive to the middle voice. Freed<sup>121</sup> suggests that the passive form makes better sense and satisfied Jn's theological view completely. There may be a much simpler (and more obvious!) explanation: the passive voice would come more natural to Jn, since the middle voice recedes in the Koiné and is substituted either by the active or by the passive forms.<sup>122</sup> The *όστούν* in the singular and the *αύτοϋ* definitely favour the Pentateuch as source. As for the omission of the *ἀπ'*, it is natural with *αύτοϋ* referring to a person. On the other hand, Jn could have fused the two members of Ps 34,21 into one so that *ἐν ἐξ αὐτῶν* (*αὐτῶν* referring to *πάντα τὰ όστᾱ αὐτῶν*) would have become *όστούν* and the *αὐτῶν* would have been changed to *αύτοϋ*, in order to apply the text specifically to Jesus.<sup>123</sup>

We must adopt other criteria in order to determine whether Jn is thinking of the paschal lamb (and quoting the Pentateuch) or of the suffering righteous (and quoting the Psalm).

Is Jesus presented as the paschal lamb in the Fourth Gospel? There are a number of indications that the question can be answered affirmatively.

Both 18,28 and 19,31 mention the Passover. Jn 19,31 is particularly important. The Law required that the bodies of the executed be removed before sunset. Jn (unless he is guilty of ignorance) need not

<sup>120</sup> The reading is that of B (the other witnesses have *συντρίβετε*)—A also reads *συντρίβεται* at Ex 12,46.

<sup>121</sup> *Op. cit.*, 113.

<sup>122</sup> Cf. M. Zerwick, *Graecitas biblica exemplis illustratur* (Rome, 1955), §§ 171-174.

<sup>123</sup> This was already pointed out by C. C. Torrey, "The Date of the Crucifixion according to the Fourth Gospel", *JBL* 50 (1931) 227-241, 231.

have added that the next day was the Sabbath and the great Sabbath<sup>124</sup> at that. The explanations advanced by exegetes to explain the reference have been noted.<sup>125</sup> One should add that the reference to the great Sabbath also allowed Jn to emphasize that Jesus died on the eve of the Passover, the day on which the paschal lambs were slaughtered. At 19,14, just before the crucial point of the trial is reached and Jesus given over to the Jews for crucifixion, Jn remarks that it was *παρασκευὴ τοῦ πάσχα*. Whereas in the Synoptics Jesus dies on the Passover (the 15th of Nisan), in the Fourth Gospel he dies on the day before the Passover (the 14th of Nisan).<sup>126</sup> It appears that Jn saw in this a "rapprochement" between Jesus and the paschal lambs, for he takes care to note that it was the sixth hour. Jesus is crucified at noon, according to Jn. It was at this hour that the slaughter of the paschal lambs by the priests began in the Temple courtyard.<sup>127</sup> The hour in which the Jews reject their king and forfeit their privileges as the "chosen people" is made to coincide with the hour in which preparations began for the feast which commemorated the deliverance from Egypt—the act of power which called the chosen people into existence. It is also possible that the connection of the request of the Jews with the eve of the Passover at 19,31 wishes to recall that Ex 12,10 prescribes that the paschal lamb must be consumed before the following day. The symbolism marks Jesus as the new paschal lamb—he lays down his life to give rise to the new Israel.

That this symbolism is intended can be gathered also from Jn 19,29. We shall consider this text in detail when dealing with Jn 19,28-30.<sup>128</sup> Only one detail is of interest to us here: the mentioning of "hyssop". Mk 15,36 (= Mt 27,48) reports that Jesus was offered a sponge with sour wine which was placed upon a reed (*περιθεις καλάμῳ*). Jn retains the incident: a sponge filled with sour wine is offered to

<sup>124</sup> The Sabbath is called "great" because it is the first Passover festival day (the 15th of Nisan).

<sup>125</sup> See above, p. 309 with notes.

<sup>126</sup> On this point, cf. Blinzler, *Prozess*, 104-108. Even J. Jeremias, who does not wish to admit that Jn has Jesus crucified on the eve of the Passover, admits that Jn 18,28 cannot be explained otherwise (cf. *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (New York, 1966), 80-82).

<sup>127</sup> Already Bultmann (514, n. 5); more recently Brown (883). Blinzler (*op. cit.*, 418) discards any such allusion.

<sup>128</sup> See below, pp. 352ff.

Jesus, but it is placed (περιθέντες) not on a reed (καλάμῳ) but on a hyssop (ύσσώπῳ). A bundle of hyssop would be ill-suited for lifting a wet sponge to the lips of the crucified, but it is well-suited for sprinkling. After the paschal lamb has been killed, Ex 12,22 prescribes: "λήμψετε δὲ δεσμὴν ύσσώπου and dip it in the blood ... and touch the lintel of the two doorposts". Hyssop was thus associated with the paschal liturgy and was used to sprinkle the blood of the Passover lamb on the doorposts. Many exegetes<sup>129</sup> therefore see in the hyssop of Jn 19,29 yet another trait introduced by the evangelist to signify that Christ is the paschal lamb. Others disagree and would prefer to go against the unanimous testimony of the manuscripts in order to do away with any such reference.<sup>130</sup>

Another argument comes from Jn 6,4, which places the multiplication of the loaves (and the discourse on the bread of life) at a time "when the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near". When one recalls the issue of water and blood from the side of Christ on the eve of the Passover and the obvious references to the Eucharist in Jn 6, this again speaks in favour of the presence of paschal symbolism in the Fourth Gospel.

The strongest argument, of course, would come from Jn 1,29.36, if it were possible to show that ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ points to Jesus as the paschal lamb. Hoskyns<sup>131</sup> dwells upon the magnificent "inclusion": at the beginning of the Gospel it is John the Baptist, at the end it is John the evangelist who designates Jesus as the Lamb of God. Unfortunately, it is once again impossible to be certain as to the meaning the ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ at 1,29 is meant to have. A reference to the paschal lamb is only one of many proposed possibilities, the most important of which are: 1) the lamb of the morning and evening offerings (Ex 29),<sup>132</sup> 2) the Servant of Yahweh (Is 53; Jer 11,19),<sup>133</sup> 3) the paschal lamb (Ex 12,1-28),<sup>134</sup> 4) the horned lamb of the Jewish

<sup>129</sup> Hoskyns, Brown (909), Barrett, W. Bauer, Loisy.

<sup>130</sup> Lagrange, Bernard, Dodd (*Hist. Trad.*, 123, n. 2), Bultmann (522, n. 4). The latter authors read ύσσῶ instead of ύσσώπῳ and believe in an error (by dittography). The sponge would be placed on a "spear". Brown (909f) points out that Jn uses λόγχη not ύσσός for "spear" at 19,34.

<sup>131</sup> Comm., 534.

<sup>132</sup> Origen, Maldonatus, Westcott, Schlatter.

<sup>133</sup> Origen, Cyril Alex., *Scholia Vetera*, Chrysostom, Godet, Westcott, Schanz, Brown, Burney, Jeremias, Lohmeyer.

<sup>134</sup> Cyril Jer., Alcuinus, Rupertus, Schlatter, Zahn, Loisy, Brown.

and Christian apocalyptic,<sup>135</sup> 5) the lamb as a symbol of docility, patience and innocence.<sup>136</sup>

We need not enter into a discussion concerning the merits and demerits of each of these. It is enough to say that the two interpretations which are most commonly proposed by modern exegetes are that *ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ* refers either to the Servant of Yahweh or to the paschal lamb. Indeed, some exegetes believe that the two are associated by Jn,<sup>137</sup> an association which has a certain analogy in Is 53, since the Suffering Servant is compared to a lamb.

The only serious argument advanced *against* any allusion to the paschal lamb at 1,29 is that the slaughtering of the paschal lamb had no sacrificial value and this seems to be demanded by the *ὁ ἀμνὸς ... ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἀμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου*. The Passover lamb is not clearly a sacrifice in the OT, it is true, but in Dt 16,1-5 the killing of the paschal lamb becomes a quasi-sacrificial act (both the killing and the eating must take place at the sanctuary) and Ex 13,11-16 considers the animal a substitution for the firstborn of Israel, who are not only redeemed by this substitution but spared from the death inflicted by the angel of destruction. At any rate, in later Judaism the yearly slaughtering of the Passover lamb was considered a sacrificial rite.<sup>138</sup> What is even more important is the role the faith of the primitive community, as expressed in the liturgy, had in combining heterogeneous elements so that, at an early date, the sacrificial death of Jesus, commemorated in the Eucharist, was associated with the slaying of the paschal lamb<sup>139</sup>—as is borne out by 1 Cor 5,7 and 1 Pt 1,18-19.

There is consequently no valid argument<sup>140</sup> against a reference to the paschal lamb at Jn 1,29. On the other hand, while there *are* arguments against a reference to the Suffering Servant, they are not

<sup>135</sup> Dodd, Brown (in the mind of John the Baptist).

<sup>136</sup> Augustine, Beda, Thomas, Loisy, Lagrange.

<sup>137</sup> Barrett, Brown.

<sup>138</sup> Cf. Boismard (*Du baptême à Cana*, 44); Brown (62); *Str.-Bill.*, III, 360 quotes Zeb 1,1.

<sup>139</sup> On this, see esp. Barrett, Lightfoot, W. Bauer, ad Jn 1,29.

<sup>140</sup> The only other argument is that Jn uses the term *ἀμνός* instead of *πρόβατον*. It is not probative. Although the LXX uses *πρόβατον* rather than *ἀμνός* for the paschal lamb, the two words are practically synonymous (cf. Is 53,7) and there is a good possibility that *ἀμνός* was used by Christians for the paschal lamb (cf. 1 Pt 18-19).

decisive.<sup>141</sup> One must conclude that Jn 1,29 may contain an allusion to either the paschal lamb or to the Suffering Servant. To be sure, there are indications elsewhere in the Gospel which favour the use of "paschal" imagery at 1,29, but it is equally certain that Jn also wished to present Jesus as the Suffering Servant.<sup>142</sup> The result is that we seem to be where we started from : Jn 1,29 is of no assistance in deciding the question as to whether the Pentateuch or Ps 34,21 is the source of the quotation at Jn 19,36. But this is not the case.

Dodd<sup>143</sup> argues that, in the Passion narrative, Jn quotes two Psalms "of the suffering righteous" (Jn 19,24 = Ps 22,19; Jn 19,28 = Ps 69,28), that the Psalms of the "righteous sufferer" are closely allied to the poems of the Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah and that they were among the principal sources of "testimonia" for all NT writers. Consequently (so Dodd), it is logical to suppose that the quotation in Jn 19,36 is from Ps 34. Lightfoot and Freed have contended convincingly against this view.<sup>144</sup> To begin with, *Ps 34*, as opposed to Pss 22 and 69, is not a Psalm of the "suffering righteous", so that "there is no special suitability in the quotation" (i.e., from Ps 34) "except that there is a comparison between the Lord and 'the righteous' of the OT Psalter".<sup>145</sup> Furthermore, in keeping with its not being a Psalm of the "righteous sufferer", *Ps 34 does not seem to be a "testimonium for the Passion of Christ"* in the NT.<sup>146</sup> Although it was no doubt familiar to the early Church,<sup>147</sup> it is not quoted in

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<sup>141</sup> It is objected that, although the Suffering Servant is compared to a lamb, the Servant himself is hardly represented as a lamb. Furthermore the Servant is said to "bear" sins, not to "take away" sins. Both objections are only valid to a certain extent. The comparison could have given rise to a fusion of the two images (even if the theory of Burney and Jeremias is not accepted, whereby the aramaic תִּלְיָא was mistranslated). As for the "taking upon oneself" vs. "taking away", although the distinction should be maintained in Jn (cf. Loisy, ad 1,29; Westcott, ad 1,29), it was by taking sin upon himself that Christ took it away (cf. Loisy, Godet, Westcott, Schlatter, W. Bauer, Hoskyns, Strathmann, ad 1,29).

<sup>142</sup> The Suffering Servant motifs: the silence of Jesus, the *πάσιμα* and the fact that he was reckoned among sinners are all preserved by Jn (cf. 19,9; 18,22f and 19,3; 19,18), although they are presented by Jn in such a way as to stress the majesty of Jesus (who does not, however, cease to be the Suffering Servant).

<sup>143</sup> *Interpretation*, 233-234; *Hist. Trad.*, 43-44.

<sup>144</sup> Lightfoot, 327; Freed, *op. cit.*, 113.

<sup>145</sup> Lightfoot, 327.

<sup>146</sup> Freed, *op. cit.*, 113.

<sup>147</sup> Lk 1,53; Heb 6,5; 12,14; 1 Pet 3,10-12; 2,3.

connection with the Passion and was not given the messianic interpretation given to Pss 22 and 69. As for the use Jn makes of the Psalms in the Passion, one can only say that this cannot be generalized and that, if he can quote Zechariah, he could also have quoted Exodus, especially in view of the important role Exodus typology plays in his Gospel. Finally we should mention that A. Guilding believes Ex 12,46 and Num 9,12 were read in the Synagogue at Passover on the second and third years of a three-year cycle of readings.<sup>148</sup> Guilding's theory is worthy of serious consideration<sup>149</sup> and is another reason for preferring the Pentateuch to Ps 34 as the source of the Johannine quotation.

On the whole, it seems more probable that 19,36 refers to the Pentateuch (probably Ex 12,10 (LXX) or 12,46) and that Jn wishes to present Jesus as the paschal lamb. A text of the Law is seen to be fulfilled in the fact that the soldiers do not break the legs of Jesus, but rather open his side with a lance. The incident shows that the Scripture is fulfilled in a much deeper sense because it indicates that Jesus is *the* Paschal Lamb, prefigured by the paschal lamb of the Old Covenant. His death is the new Passover, the deliverance from the slavery of sin and the gift of true freedom (Jn 8,33-36) which gives origin to the new Israel.

#### ee) *Jn 19,37*

The second *γραφή* which is fulfilled as a result of the piercing of Jesus' side is *ὁψονται εἰς ὃν ἐξεκέντησαν*. The source of the quotation raises no difficulty: it is certainly Zech 12,10 in the reading of the (primitive) MT.<sup>150</sup> The whole point of the reference is the "looking upon" the "one whom they have pierced". The fact that the side of Jesus is pierced makes of him the "one whom they have pierced"; but, in order to be fulfilled, the Scripture further demands that he be "looked upon".

<sup>148</sup> *The Fourth Gospel and Jewish Worship. A Study of the Relation of St. John's Gospel to the Ancient Jewish Lectionary System* (Oxford, 1960), 170.

<sup>149</sup> Jn 6, which reflects the Passover readings of the second year (Ex 16), of the third year (Num 11) and perhaps even of the first year (Gen 3) of the three-year cycle proposed by Guilding, speaks in favour of accepting the theory.

<sup>150</sup> The LXX read *רקרו* ("they danced") instead of *דקרו* ("they pierced"). The *ἐκέντησαν* of Jn is the normal rendering for *דקר* (cf. Judg 9,54; 1 Chron 10,4; Jer 44(37),10). The primitive Heb. probably read *והביטו אליו אשר דקרו* rather than *והביטו אלי את אשר דקר*. Jn is quoting the primitive Heb. So Torrey—cf. Freed, *op. cit.*, 110.

Is the "looking upon" the direct result of the act of "piercing" the side of Jesus? In the case of an affirmative answer, the prophecy would be fulfilled in that the Roman soldiers, who pierce his side, look upon him. The very act of piercing his side demands that they look upon him (cf. the *ὡς εἶδον* of v. 33). The *ἐξεκέντησαν* also seems to favour this interpretation. There is no apparent change of subject, so that the soldiers who pierce his side also appear to be the ones who look upon him. The soldiers, however, act at the instigation of the Jews. It is the Jews who demand that the legs of Jesus be broken; the piercing of his side is the direct result of their request. One can therefore say that it is the Jews who look upon the one whom they have pierced. The *ὄψονται* is no longer directly connected with the physical act of piercing the side of Jesus but with the piercing in more general terms. The Jews look upon him whom they (the Jews, through the agency of the Roman soldiers) have pierced.

Being dissociated from the material, physical act of piercing, "the one whom they have pierced" is "looked upon" for another reason: he is looked upon as a result of his being "lifted up". The "looking upon" cannot be divorced from Jesus' *ὑψωθῆναι* (cf. what has been said about Jn 3,14).<sup>151</sup> His being "lifted up" draws the eyes of the Jews towards him and, since he is now the "one whom they have pierced", the prophecy is fulfilled. The *ὁ ἑωρακὼς μεμαρτύρηκεν* of v. 35 shows that the "lifting up" of Jesus exposes him to the sight of *all* and effects that *all* look upon him as the one who has been pierced. In other words, the *ὄψονται* need not have the same subject as *ἐξεκέντησαν*, so that one can and should *also* read: "They" (indeterminate: all men) "shall look upon him whom they" (the Jews, the Roman soldiers) "have pierced".

These considerations clear the way for a correct understanding of the quotation in Jn. It is important to determine the subject of *ὄψονται* in order to know whether we are dealing with a "Heilsaussage" or an "Unheilsaussage". In Zech 12,10 we are dealing with a "Heilsweissagung". The context speaks of salvation: "I will pour out on the ... inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of compassion and supplication, so that, when they look upon him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him ..." The mourning is followed by the promise: "There shall be, on that day, a fountain opened for the ... inhabitants of Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin ..." (a text which

<sup>151</sup> Above, pp. 332ff.

is certainly close to both Jn 19,34 and 7,38.39). The context of 19,37 (see what is said below on v. 35)<sup>152</sup> shows that Jn wanted the quotation to be understood in this sense. The direct result of the piercing of Jesus' side is that water and blood flow forth; "he who saw it" (ὁ ἑώρακώς) is a believer<sup>153</sup> who testifies to this as to the great salvific event in order that all might look upon Jesus as he does, with faith.

Jn 3,14 and 12,32 had insisted upon the salvific nature of Christ's ὑψωθῆναι. It is the ὑψοῦν which draws the eyes of all towards the one who has been pierced and from whom the living waters flow. Jesus was lifted up and his side was pierced in order that all should look upon him with faith and have eternal life. Of course, this does not always come about. Some look upon him with disbelief. For these the ὄραν has no salvific value; on the contrary, it becomes their condemnation. The accent is not on the judgement, but this idea is also present,<sup>154</sup> as it is at 3,14f and 8,28.

Once again the concrete incident (in the present case the looking upon the pierced Jesus, lifted up on the cross) which is said to fulfill the γραφή is mentioned as revealing the true significance of Christ's death. The modalities of Christ's death, as fulfilment of what was written in the Scriptures, reveal its salvific value, but *it is the death of Christ itself which is the true fulfilment of the Scripture.*

d) *The death of Jesus as the τελειωθῆναι of the Scriptures*

aa) *Jn 19,28-30*

Jn 19,28-30 constitutes a well-rounded unit, clearly marked off by the inclusion: τετέλεσται (v. 28) ... τετέλεσται (v. 30). Within this framework, Jn narrates an incident also recorded by Mk in a manner quite different from that of Mk. There is reason to believe that vv. 28b-29 came down to Jn from an independent tradition and were given their present "Rahmen" by the evangelist.

Mk 15,36 reads: γεμίσας σπόγγον ὄξους ... ἐπότιζεν αὐτόν. There

<sup>152</sup> Pp. 357ff.

<sup>153</sup> The identity of the "one who has seen" is a *quaestio disputata*. Probably it is the Beloved Disciple. At any rate he is one who bears witness to the significance of what he sees (see pp. 357ff), he is a believer.

<sup>154</sup> Cf. Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 20.



can be no doubt that this is a direct reference to Ps 69(68),22: *εἰς τὴν δίψαν μου ἐπότισάν με ὄξος*.

Jn is quite certainly referring to the same OT text, but the strange thing is that in the Fourth Gospel the offering of the ὄξος is placed in connection with the thirst of Jesus: *διψῶ (= εἰς τὴν δίψαν μου)*. The context of the Johannine quotation makes much better sense than that of Mk. One could draw the conclusion that Jn has worked his way back to the LXX, modifying and completing his Synoptic source. However, it is far more probable, as Dodd has pointed out,<sup>155</sup> that Jn is drawing from an independent tradition.<sup>156</sup> The nucleus of the passage is constituted by the "fulfilment" of a verse of a Psalm which was well known and much used as a "testimonium" in the early tradition.<sup>157</sup> Jn 2,17 and 15,25 quote two passages from this Psalm which are not quoted elsewhere in the NT.

It is quite possible that the tradition which came down to Jn quoted Ps 69,22 as a "testimony" to the thirst of Jesus, since, in the Psalm, thirst is seen as one of the sufferings of the "righteous sufferer" and the interpretation of the death of Christ as that of the "righteous sufferer" is quite primitive. This would explain why Jn lays stress on the thirst of Jesus (and its being quenched) and only secondarily on the ὄξος. Thirst plays no part in Mk's conception of the sufferings of God's Servant; it is vital to that of Jn.

When the Passion tradition was being formed, this trait of Jesus' thirst (which has every probability of being historical) was preserved and transmitted as a "fulfilment" of Ps 69,22. Jn retained it because it was in keeping with his theology.<sup>158</sup>

Jn may have retouched what came down to him in one minor detail: by substituting *ὑσσώπω* to a primitive *καλάμῳ* or equivalent. If the tradition already contained an introductory fulfilment formula he also modified the verb. The introductory fulfilment formula *ἵνα τελειωθῇ ἡ γραφή* is singular. It is used nowhere else in the NT, although the verb *τελεῖν* is used in such a "formula".<sup>159</sup> Given the highly technical meaning the verb *τελειοῦν* has in Jn, it was, in all

<sup>155</sup> *Hist. Trad.*, 41-42; 123.

<sup>156</sup> The only word Jn has in common with Mk is *περιτιθέναι*, for the use of the sponge was unavoidable, given the circumstances.

<sup>157</sup> Cf. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*, 57-59.

<sup>158</sup> Dodd, *Hist. Trad.*, 42 and n. 3.

<sup>159</sup> Cf. Lk 18,31; 22,37; Act 13,29; Apoc 17,17.

probability, introduced into the fulfilment formula for a very specific reason, reason which is to be connected with the context and with the double *τετέλεσται* of vv. 28.30 in particular.

*The relation of the "fulfilment" of the Scripture to the τετέλεσται of vv. 28.30*

The *ἵνα τελειωθῇ ἡ γραφή* is a final clause and a final clause is normally related to a governing verb which precedes it (in our case: *τετέλεσται*). But Debrunner<sup>160</sup> gives the verse as an example of a "Voranschiebung" of the final clause, so that it is made to depend upon *λέγει*. According to whether the former or the latter view is adopted, we would have the following affirmations: 1) "Jesus, knowing that everything was now consummated in order for the Scripture to be brought to perfection, said ..." 2) "Jesus, knowing that everything was now consummated, said to fulfill the Scripture ..."

Almost all commentators<sup>161</sup> would have the final clause depend upon *λέγει*; yet, if it were made to depend upon *τετέλεσται*, an apparent difficulty would be eliminated. Jesus knows that everything has already been brought to fulfilment, but then says, "I thirst", in order that the Scripture be fulfilled. All has been brought to fulfilment, yet the Scripture has not yet been fulfilled! It is undeniable that there is a certain incongruity, even if it is, so to speak, partially rectified in v. 30, where Jesus exclaims, "*Τετέλεσται*" after the Scripture has been fulfilled.

We believe it is possible to explain this anomaly and still hold that the *ἵνα*-clause depends upon *λέγει*. The *τετέλεσται* refers to Jesus' earthly "work". This work is seen as "fulfilled" in v. 28 and then again in v. 30. Between these two affirmations comes the fulfilment of the *γραφή*. It seems evident that Jn, through the inclusion, wished to make clear that it is with Jesus' death that his earthly work is fulfilled (brought to perfection). Although in v. 28 Jesus speaks as if his earthly work were already fulfilled (before his death), v. 30 has the fulfilment coincide with his death and thus explains the *ἥδη τετέλεσται* as a sort of anticipation. It is important

<sup>160</sup> *Blass-Deb.*, § 478.

<sup>161</sup> The notable exceptions: E. A. Abbott (*Johannine Grammar* (London, 1906) no. 2115, p. 123f) and Brown (908). Brown cites the translations of O. M. Norlie and G. Bampfylde ("John XIX, 28, a Case for a Different Translation", *NovT* 11 (1969) 247-260, 253), who also attach the final clause to what precedes.

to note that the fulfilment of the *γραφή* is wedged in between these two affirmations. We have said that vv. 28b-29 were taken over by Jn from tradition and given a Johannine "frame". In our view this is a factor which must be taken into account when explaining the relationship of the *τετέλεσται* to the *τελειωθῆναι* of the *γραφή*.

Thüsing has argued most convincingly<sup>162</sup> in favour of seeing in the *γραφή* a reference to the Scripture as a whole and the death of Jesus (not merely his thirst) as the *τελειωθῆναι* of the *γραφή*. Two factors speak in favour of this interpretation (it should be noted that the two—the *γραφή* as "Schriftganzes" and the death of Jesus as the fulfilment of the Scriptures—go hand in hand): 1) The idea of Jesus' death dominates vv. 28-30. It would be strange that Jn should mention a secondary detail as the fulfilment of the Scripture and not the death itself.<sup>163</sup> 2) The use of *τελειοῦν* instead of *πληροῦν* speaks in favour of giving this particular quotation a special significance. The first point needs no explanation, but a few words must be added to what has already been said concerning the second.

In speaking about the role the fulfilment of the OT "prophecies" plays in the Fourth Gospel, we mentioned that the "fulfilment formula" *ἵνα πληρωθῇ ἡ γραφή* is proper to Jn and to Mt (although Mt always has *τὸ ρηθέν* instead of *ἡ γραφή*) and that, in Jn, it is the death of Jesus which is the locus of the fulfilment of the Scripture. It is noteworthy that *ἵνα πληρωθῇ* as opposed to *γεγραμμένον ἐστίν* (*γέγραπται*) is found for the first time at Jn 12,38, when Jesus' public ministry is looked upon as a thing of the past and his death is already in view. It is then used frequently.<sup>164</sup> The end of Jesus' earthly ministry (his death) is the "fulfilment" of "what is written" in a special sense.<sup>165</sup>

At Jn 19,28 we go a step further. Here the verb *τελειοῦν* is used—a verb which marks the "perfective" character of Jesus' activity and is related in a particular way to his death. Were Jn, at 19,28f, simply thinking of a particular circumstance of Jesus' Passion, it is improbable that he would have used the verb *τελειοῦν* (cf. 19,24,36). It is far more likely that the detail which came down to him from

<sup>162</sup> *Erhöhung*, 64-69.

<sup>163</sup> Rightly Thüsing (*ibid.*, 65), following P. Gaechter.

<sup>164</sup> Jn 13,18; 15,25; 17,12; (18,9); (18,32); 19,24,36.

<sup>165</sup> Cf. Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 67.

tradition as the "last" to be fulfilled was considered by Jn as in some way representative of the death of Jesus itself.

The only difficulty which is raised by interpreting *ἵνα τελειωθῇ ἡ γραφή* as applying to the death of Jesus (and, correlatively, *ἡ γραφή* as indicating the Scripture as a whole) is that the *ἵνα τελειωθῇ ἡ γραφή* depends upon *λέγει, Διψῶ*. The difficulty was noted by Thüsing,<sup>166</sup> but he did not pay any attention to the fact that Jn, at this point, was working with a "testimonium" which came down to him from tradition. Jn gave the *πληρωθῆναι* of the *γραφή* a new depth of meaning by introducing the *τελειωθῇ*, by wedging the OT quotation and its "fulfilment" between the *τετέλεσται* of v. 28 and of v. 30 and by imbedding it in a context deeply marked by his theology, but he could not avoid the grammatical difficulty which arose from the artificial "suture". The "ambiguity" and the grammatical tension arise<sup>167</sup> from the attempt to give what he received from tradition a broader and deeper application.

Jn wished to present the death of Jesus as the fulfilment of the Scripture(s) and yet, "prima facie", the fulfilment of the Scripture comes about through the cry of Jesus, "I thirst", and the resulting action. It is legitimate to attempt to bring the two into consonance with each other, because they were not considered incompatible by Jn, but one must admit that a certain tension remains and that the telescoping of the two ideas made by Jn was not perfectly successful. Jn 19,28-30 would make better sense if what can be presumed to have come down from tradition were left out: "Jesus, knowing that everything had been done to fulfill the Scriptures, said, 'It is consummated', and, bowing his head, he handed over the Spirit".

The last detail of Jesus' Passion, which immediately preceded his death, already interpreted by tradition as a fulfilment of the Scripture, was used by Jn to convey the conviction that the Scriptures (as a whole) are brought to fulfilment by the death of Jesus.<sup>168</sup> The death

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<sup>166</sup> *Op. cit.*, 65: "Gegen diese Auffassung spricht zwar die Satzbindung in v. 28, die den Finalsatz mit *λέγει* verbindet; und das, was gesagt wird, ist eben zunächst der Durstuf".

<sup>167</sup> The ambiguity arises from the fact that the final clause is attached at one and the same time to the *τετέλεσται* and to the *λέγει*.

<sup>168</sup> The *εἰδώς* refers not only to the "I thirst" and the ensuing action, but also and primarily to the death of Jesus. Thüsing (*op. cit.*, 65f) has found an interesting parallel for this usage at Jn 13,1-5.

of Jesus is, at one and the same time, the fulfilment of the work entrusted to him by the Father and the fulfilment of the Scriptures.

If the view we proposed is accepted, one is no longer faced with an "aut ... aut". The *ἵνα τελειωθῇ ἡ γραφή* can be referred to the actualization of the "noch ausstehende Einzelheit" and to the death of Jesus *as such*. On the other hand, there is no longer any true opposition between the *τετέλεσται* and the *τελειωθῆναι* of the *γραφή*. Rather than being "der Schrifterfüllung ... übergeordnet",<sup>169</sup> the *τετέλεσται* is made to coincide with the *Schrifterfüllung*. The death of Jesus is the fulfilment of the Scriptures!

bb) *Jn 19,34b.35*

The Scriptures are brought to fulfilment by the death of Jesus. There would, consequently, seem to be no possibility of speaking of the fulfilment of the Scripture after this event. Yet, Jn 19,28 is not the last reference to the fulfilment of the Scripture. The formula *ἵνα πληρωθῇ ἡ γραφή* is found once again at 19,36 and introduces two "prophecies" which appear to be fulfilled after Jesus' death. Does this contradict what has been said about Jn 19,28-30?

We have treated Jn 19,36.37 before 19,28-30 because, although it would appear that these two Scriptures are fulfilled *after* Jesus' death, what is described in vv. 32-35 is the immediate result of Jesus' death and subordinated to it. One might say that, whereas from a "temporal" point of view there is a sort of "Nacheinander" which gives the impression that two Scriptures find their fulfilment after Jesus' death, from a theological point of view it is the death of Jesus itself which brings these two Scriptures to fulfilment, so that one can speak of them being fulfilled *in* the very death of Jesus. Jn can therefore speak of the *τελειωθῆναι* of the *γραφή* (Scriptures as a whole) by the death of Jesus and yet speak of an event which took place after his death (the piercing of his side) as the *πληρωθῆναι* of two scriptural passages.

In order to understand this, one must bear in mind: 1) the relationship of vv. 36.37 to v. 34b.35, 2) the meaning of what is related in v. 34b (and hence the relationship of this event to the death of Jesus).

<sup>169</sup> Thüsing, *ibid.*, 65.

1) *The relationship of vv. 36.37 to vv. 34b.35*

For Bultmann vv. 34b.35 are an addition of the "ecclesiastical redactor".<sup>170</sup> The assumption is based upon the parenthetical nature of these two verses. The scriptural references in vv. 36f hardly refer to the issue of water and blood. Furthermore the issue of water and blood would have, according to Bultmann (and this was no doubt a decisive factor for him), sacramental significance, referring to Baptism and the Eucharist.

One can concede that vv. 34b.35 can be left out without difficulty. Vv. 36.37 follow very well upon v. 34a.<sup>171</sup> It is equally true that in the scriptural quotations there is no explicit allusion to the issue of water and blood. The fulfilment of "No bone of his shall be broken" refers to v. 33 (οὐ κατέαξαν αὐτοῦ τὰ σκέλη) and that of "They shall look upon him whom they have pierced" refers to v. 34 (λόγχη αὐτοῦ τὴν πλευρὰν ἔνυξεν), although not perfectly. But the sacramental significance, which no doubt was a decisive factor for Bultmann, is far from certain.<sup>172</sup>

Even if one accepts the premise that everything "sacramental" is a later addition, vv. 34b.35 do not fall in this category. They are susceptible of receiving another interpretation which is far more likely. When this interpretation is accepted, vv. 34b.35 become part and parcel of the "Johannine" theology (if one uses Bultmann's standards) and, what is more, both the quotations of vv. 36 and 37 (but of 37 in particular) take up the thought present in v. 34b.

The relationship of vv. 36.37 to vv. 34b.35 hinges on the meaning to be given to v. 34b.

2) *The meaning of vv. 34b.(35)*

In v. 35 the writer insists that it is the one who has seen (ὁ ἑωρακώς) who has borne witness (μεμαρτύρηκεν) and that his witness (μαρτυρία) is true (ἀληθινή), that he knows he is speaking the truth (ἀληθῆ λέγει). What the eyewitness has seen and that to which he testifies is not the piercing of Jesus' side, but rather the flowing forth of blood and water.

<sup>170</sup> Comm., 525-526.

<sup>171</sup> But see what is said below about the γάρ in Jn 19,36.

<sup>172</sup> But see what is said below, n. 183.

In examining the use of *μαρτυρεῖν* in Jn,<sup>173</sup> Jn 19,35 presented itself<sup>174</sup> as one of the rare exceptions in which a disciple seemed to testify to a "fact", rather than to the "truth". But we claimed that this was not the case. The object of the *μαρτυρία* at 19,35 is not the physical phenomenon observed (although this is included), but the hidden reality discerned by faith in this event. The time has now come to ask what is signified and manifested by the issue of blood and water.

The almost exasperated insistence of the writer on the truthfulness of the *μαρτυρία* of the eyewitness leaves no doubt that it is something of supreme importance. Indeed, Jn 19,35 appears in some way related to Jn 20,31. Of all the "signs" Jesus did, some are borne witness to (inasmuch as they are written down in the "book") *ἵνα πιστεύσητε* (Jn 20,21). One "sign" is singled out among these as worthy of being borne witness to in a particular way, as if it represented or embodied all the others,<sup>175</sup> *ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς πιστεύσητε* (Jn 19,35). What do the blood and water symbolize which is of such central importance?

### *Blood and water*

The whole question of water symbolism in Jn and its possible derivation will be treated in the Fourth Part.<sup>176</sup> We shall see that the "living water" Jesus gives at 4,10-15 refers to his teaching-revelation and that the "living water" of Jn 7,37-39 refers both to his teaching-revelation and to the Spirit.

Jn 19,34b and Jn 7,37-39 are related not only in virtue of the *ῥῶον* which flows from Jesus, but also in that the water itself is related to his *δοξασθῆναι* and to his *ὑψωθῆναι*. The term *ὑψοῦν* is not found explicitly at Jn 19,34, but the thought is obviously present: it is the side of the "exalted" Jesus which is pierced. Thus, at both Jn 7,39 and 19,34, the death of Jesus on the cross is the precondition for the gift of the "water". There is consequently every reason to connect the *ῥῶον* of Jn 19,34 with the *ῥῶον ζῶν* of Jn 7,38 and to

<sup>173</sup> See above, pp. 196ff.

<sup>174</sup> See above, p. 197.

<sup>175</sup> Dodd (*Interpretation*, 438f) rightly speaks of the arrest, trial and crucifixion as a "σημεῖον on the grand scale". But even within the Passion narrative there is *one* σημεῖον which is singled out and given representative value: the issue of blood and water.

<sup>176</sup> See below, pp. 473ff.

see in it the gift of the Spirit (related to the revelation of Jesus), resulting in eternal life.<sup>177</sup>

At 7,39 the words of Jesus *καθὼς εἶπεν ἡ γραφή, πόταμοι ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας αὐτοῦ ρεύσουσιν ὕδατος ζῶντος* were commented upon by the evangelist as referring to the gift of the Spirit, related to Jesus' glorification (*δοξασθῆναι*). Jn 19,34 makes clear that it is the death of Jesus which results in the issue of "water" from his side. The reference to "blood" relates what is signified by the "water" to the death of Jesus.

The crucifixion for Jn is an "anschauliches Bild" in which he discerns the reality of Jesus' *ὑψωθῆναι* and *δοξασθῆναι*.<sup>178</sup> It is his death on the cross which constitutes his "going up" to the Father and which not only ushers in but gives rise to the second stage of his "work".<sup>179</sup> As such it dominates not only the first stage, but also the second stage of Jesus' "work" and is a "bleibendes Strukturprinzip" for the activity of Jesus as glorified Lord.<sup>180</sup>

The death of Jesus on the cross is "Offenbarungsgeschehen". It manifests the love of God for the world, Jesus' love for and obedience to the Father (and, consequently, his unity with the Father) and his love for "his own" who are in the world. But Jesus' death on the cross is not only "revelatory". As *the* atoning sacrifice (blood), it effects the gift of the Spirit (gives rise to the second stage of Jesus' "work").<sup>181</sup>

As glorified Lord, Jesus sets forth (in a sense: truly begins) his "work", which is that of giving life to the world. This he does through the Spirit (and through his disciples).<sup>182</sup> The Spirit is the gift Jesus gives by dying on the cross (viz., which he sends as glorified Lord). The role of the Spirit is to lead the disciples into the fulness of "truth" which Jesus revealed and is. He accomplishes this by having men (the disciples) recognize the Exalted and

<sup>177</sup> The reference of Jn 19,34 to Jn 7,38 is "inevitable" (Dodd, *ibid.*, 438). Jn 19,34, traditionally, has been considered the fulfilment of Jn 7,38 (cf. Glasson, *Moses*, 52-54) and is so considered by most modern commentators.

<sup>178</sup> Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 8; 12; 33; esp. 301-304.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, 32-33 and esp. 304-307.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, 140-141; 178-190. On the activity of Jesus as glorified Lord, 101-107; further the two following notes.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, 172 and n. 125.

<sup>182</sup> For an extensive treatment of what is stated here in "point" form, cf. Thüsing, *ibid.*, §§ 9; 10; 11, pp. 123-190.



Glorified, from whom the "living water" (viz., the Spirit himself) proceeds, in the Crucified.

The paradox explains in what manner the objective gift of the Spirit is inseparable from the "Offenbarung". The revelation of Jesus finds its fullest expression in his death but his death itself effects the gift of the Spirit, who bears witness to the significance and meaning of this death which, when accepted, results in "eternal life". Expressed in other terms: the glorified Jesus, through the Spirit he sends as Glorified, draws all men to his cross and into his glory. The disciples are drawn to Jesus' cross through brotherly love and "Kreuzesnachfolge", in "obedience". In this they glorify Jesus and the Father and are drawn into his glory. On the other hand, by so doing, they set forth (in the Spirit) the "work" of Jesus and lead all men to eternal life—by having them enter into fellowship with them and become "disciples" (viz., enter into fellowship with the Son and the Father) in their turn.

When one bears this general structure in mind, Jn 19,34 offers no difficulty. The issue of blood and water signifies that the death of Jesus on the cross results in the gift of life. The blood calls attention to the fact that the gift of the Spirit (itself connected with the gift of the "truth"), represented by the water, is the direct result of Jesus' death on the cross.

Once this interpretation is given to Jn 19,34b (without excluding a secondary reference to the Eucharist and Baptism),<sup>183</sup> the relationship of vv. 36.37 to vv. 34b.35 becomes clear.

We must begin by recalling the interpretation given above to vv. 36.37. The first Scripture: *ὅστων οὐ συντριβήσεται αὐτοῦ* is fulfilled in the *οὐ κατέαξαν αὐτοῦ τὰ σκέλη*. But the second Scripture (*ὄψονται εἰς ὃν ἐξεκέντησαν*) does not exactly correspond to the event mentioned in v. 34a (*λόγχη αὐτοῦ τὴν πλευρὰν ἔνυξεν*). The "looking upon" Jesus, as we tried to show,<sup>184</sup> is only indirectly related to the piercing of his side. If Jesus is "looked upon" as the one who is pierced, this is to be attributed to his *ὑψωθῆναι* rather than to his side being pierced. This led us to take the whole context

<sup>183</sup> If one adopts the criteria set down by Brown ("Johannine Sacramentary", 51-76), one can accept a reference to the Eucharist and Baptism at Jn 19,34, but both references are secondary. The reference to Baptism, in view of Jn 3,5, is far more certain than the reference to the Eucharist.

<sup>184</sup> See above, pp. 350-352.

of Zech 12,10 into consideration and to conclude that the prophecy of Zech 12,10 is fulfilled because of the salvific value of Jesus' death for those who look upon him (with faith). The same conclusion was reached with regard to v. 36.<sup>185</sup> The prophecy of Ex 12,46 (Ps 34,20) is fulfilled not so much in the fact that Jesus' legs are not broken (although in this case we have an exact correspondence between the *γραφή* and the event of v. 33) but rather because this points to him as the Paschal Lamb prefigured by the paschal lambs of the OT and draws attention to the salvific value of his death. The modalities of Jesus' death, in accordance with the Scriptures, serve to indicate that his death as such is the fulfilment of the Scripture as a whole.

The interpretation given to vv. 36.37 therefore makes a reference to v. 34b not only natural but somewhat necessary. V. 34b affirms precisely that Jesus' death is the great salvific event; the true meaning of the fulfilment of the Scriptures at vv. 36.37 is thereby brought to the attention of the reader. The connection is all the more close in that the piercing of the side and the issue of blood are considered "ad modum unius" and the evangelist, after having emphasized the truth of the testimony of him who bore witness to the issue of blood and water, adds: *ἐγένετο γὰρ ταῦτα ἵνα ἡ γραφή πληρωθῇ*. The *γάρ* attaches the fulfilment of the *γραφή* and the following quotations to v. 35 and to the issue of blood and water.<sup>186</sup> When one further recalls that, as was pointed out above, the context of Zech 12,10 must be borne in mind when interpreting v. 37 and that Zech 13,1 almost certainly is behind the reference to water in 19,34b,<sup>187</sup> one can hardly doubt that the two *γραφαί* which are fulfilled at Jn 19,36.37 cannot be dissociated from the issue of blood and water,<sup>188</sup> that is to say: from the death of Jesus itself. In this sense Jn 19,34-37 is but an ulterior clarification of the manner in which the death of Jesus on the cross is the *τελειωθῆναι* of the Scriptures as a whole (Jn 19,28-30).

### *Conclusion*

The trial and death of Jesus show, more clearly than ever, that

<sup>185</sup> See above, pp. 344-350.

<sup>186</sup> Thüsing (*op. cit.*, 20 and n. 32) rightly points out that, if vv. 34b.35 were left out, the *γάρ* would be rather superfluous.

<sup>187</sup> See what has been said above, pp. 350f.

<sup>188</sup> This position is also that adopted by Brown (955) and Thüsing (*op. cit.*, 19-20; 162).

the Law of the Jews is incapable of securing the conviction and death of Jesus as one who is opposed to the Law (18,31; 19,6) and that, on the contrary, the death of Jesus is demanded by the Law as its fulfilment (19,7). By perverting justice and securing Jesus' condemnation on grounds which have nothing to do with the Law, but are rather opposed to it (the proclamation of Caesar as King of the Jews!), the Jews are shown to have rejected the Law. At the same time they contribute, paradoxically and in a negative way, to bring about the fulfilment of the Law. The death of Jesus is *κατὰ τὸν νόμον* because he *was* the Son of God (not because he *made* himself Son of God) and Jn takes pains to show that the death of Jesus is the fulfilment of the individual Scriptures and of the Scripture as a whole.

The death of Jesus is *κατὰ τὸν νόμον*. Does Jn wish to say that the death of Jesus is not only the fulfilment of the Scriptures, but also of the Law? There is a correspondence between the Scriptures and the Law (the two being to some extent synonymous), but Jn seems to avoid saying that Jesus fulfills the Law (viz., that his death is the fulfilment of the Law). He prefers to say that Jesus' death is *κατὰ τὸν νόμον* and that it is the fulfilment of the Scriptures as a whole (19,28-30). The nuance is very slight, but nevertheless should be maintained. We shall see the significance of this when we seek to define the exact meaning *νόμος* has for Jn.



## PART FOUR

### THE METAMORPHOSIS OF “NOMISTIC TERMINI” AND THE TRANSFERRAL OF SYMBOLS FOR THE LAW TO JESUS IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL



## THE METAMORPHOSIS OF "NOMISTIC TERMINI" IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL

Jn uses many terms which, for a Jewish ear, would have a distinctly "nomistic" accent. Yet, in Jn, these expressions do not have the meaning they have in Judaism. Is the association of Johannine and Jewish (nomistic) terminology fortuitous, or has Jn deliberately given traditional nomistic expressions a new "Christian" value? This is the question we wish to investigate in the first part of the present section.

It is obvious that if, on the one hand, the Johannine terminology is deeply rooted in the Jewish "nomistic" tradition and if, on the other hand, Jn has given all these terms a new meaning, the conclusion which should be drawn is that Jn is presenting Christ and Christianity as the "new order" which supplants traditional Judaism but which is also, in a certain sense, its continuation by progression and transformation—its metamorphosis.

Should such be the case, the investigation will yield precious material for gaining an insight into the relationship Jn sees between Christ and Moses, the Law and the Gospel, Judaism and Christianity.

The terms, or expressions, in question are : 1) τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν; 2) τὰ ἔργα (τὸ ἔργον) τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν; 3) τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους) τηρεῖν; 4) τὰς ἐντολὰς τηρεῖν.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### ΤΟ ΘΕΛΗΜΑ (ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ) ΠΟΙΕΙΝ AND ΤΟ ἜΡΓΟΝ (ΤΑ ἜΡΓΑ) ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ ΠΟΙΕΙΝ

#### 1. Τὸ θέλημα (τοῦ θεοῦ) ποιεῖν

We have already mentioned<sup>1</sup> that ποιεῖν τὸν νόμον at Jn 7,19 is used in close association with the ποιεῖν τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ (τοῦ θεοῦ) of 7,17. The condition for recognizing the teaching of Jesus as divine revelation is the will to do God's will; the reason why the Jews seek to kill Jesus is that they do not "do the Law". The parallelism, as well as the formula τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν itself, raised the question as to whether Jn was not consciously using Jewish terminology which refers to the doing of the Law (will of God) to refer to something quite different: belief in Jesus. If this is the case, it was pointed out, the expression τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ (= αὐτοῦ) ποιεῖν would not have been used by Jn without reason. It suggests the will to accept and follow the Law, but refers to the will to accept Jesus as the Revealer. We now wish to take up this text and the expression it contains and try to determine the meaning it has in Jn and the background from which he may have derived it.

The explanations given by the commentaries to τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν at Jn 7,17 reflect the ambivalence of the formula. A number of authors interpret the "will to do the will of God" in an ethical sense, even though some of these also refer to the doing of the Law. "Right conduct", "moral perfection and goodwill", "moral harmony with the will of God" or "the aspirations of an upright conscience" will enable one to discover the divine origin of Christ's teaching.<sup>2</sup> Others reject any "ethical" interpretation and hold that the will to do the will of God is the will to believe. To do God's will is to have faith.<sup>3</sup> A third group, more sensitive to the Jewish phraseology, claims that to do God's will is to do the Law.<sup>4</sup> These authors, however,

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 100; 132-134.

<sup>2</sup> The words quoted are those of Bernard, Lagrange, Westcott and Loisy, respectively.

<sup>3</sup> Bultmann, Barrett, Brown.

<sup>4</sup> Schlatter, Hoskyns, G. Schrenk (*TWNT* III, art. θέλημα, 58, 35ff), Lightfoot, B. Weiss. The interpretation goes back to Chrysostom (*P.G.* 57, 466) and Euthymius



while giving the expression its traditional Jewish meaning, feel the need of going beyond it in some way, either by saying that the doing of the Law leads to faith<sup>5</sup> or that faith is also referred to.<sup>6</sup>

The exegetes who see a reference to the doing of the Law in τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν have good grounds to do so. The expression τὸ θέλημα (τοῦ θεοῦ) ποιεῖν corresponds to the Hebrew עשה רצון. Both are consecrated expressions for "doing the Law".

A) Τὸ θέλημα (τοῦ θεοῦ) ποιεῖν—עשה רצון in the OT  
(MT and LXX) and in the Jewish tradition

In the LXX ποιεῖν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ (σοῦ, αὐτοῦ = τοῦ θεοῦ) is found at: Ps 39(40),9; 142(143),10; 1 Esd 8,16; 9,9; Sir 16,3 (S<sup>2</sup>); 4 Macc 18,16; ποιεῖν τὰ θελήματα τοῦ θεοῦ (σοῦ, αὐτοῦ) at Ps 102(103),21 (MT and LXX A S<sup>2</sup> = sing.); Is 44,28 (MT=sing.); 48,14 (MT=sing.); 2 Macc 1,3.

The MT reads עשה רצון at Ps 143(142),10; 40(39),9; 103(102),21. The two texts of Isaiah, rendered by ποιεῖν τὰ θελήματα in the LXX, read: שלם חפץ (Is 44,28); עשה חפצו (Is 48,14). Noteworthy in the OT usage (MT and LXX) is the fact that, where the MT has עשה רצון, the LXX invariably renders τὸ θέλημα (viz., τὰ θελήματα) ποιεῖν (Ps 39(40),9; 102(103),21; 142(143),10). There is only one exception: 2 Esd 10,11, where the Heb. עשה רצונו is rendered by ποιήσατε τὸ ἀρεστόν ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ—a formulation we shall also find in Jn 8,29.

The fact that the LXX always (with one exception) translates (הורה) עשה רצון by τὸ θέλημα (τοῦ θεοῦ) ποιεῖν would not be significant, except that: 1) רצון, when used in conjunction with עשה in the formula עשה רצון and when referring to the will of God,<sup>7</sup> is *always* translated by θέλημα. 2) Used in conjunction with עשה in the formula עשה כרצון, רצון is sometimes translated by θέλημα.<sup>8</sup> 3) Outside of such formulas, רצון is *never* translated by θέλημα,<sup>9</sup> but by other

Zig. (P.G. 129, 393). It should be noted that even those authors who give an "ethical" interpretation to the "works" sometimes refer to the Law (Lagrange, Westcott, Loisy), but find the explanation unsatisfactory.

<sup>5</sup> B. Weiss, Schlatter.

<sup>6</sup> Lightfoot, Hoskyns, Schrenk (loc. cit.).

<sup>7</sup> The influence of the fixed formula is visible at Ps 144(145),19, where עשה רצון, referring to man's will, is also translated by τὸ θέλημα ποιεῖν.

<sup>8</sup> Where the MT has עשה כרצון we also find the same tendency, but it is far less marked. Est 1,8 is rendered by ποιεῖν τὸ θέλημα. In the remaining cases we have: ποιεῖν κατὰ τὸ θέλημα (Dan LXX 11,16.36; 8,4; 11,3.16.36; Est 9,5—l.v.); ποιεῖν καθὼς ἂν βούληται (Dan LXX 11,3). Once we find ποιεῖν ὡς ἀρεστόν ἐνώπιον αὐτῶν (Neh 9,24 = 2 Esd 19,24 LXX). The Hebrew in all these cases means "doing as one pleases" and differs from עשה רצון. רצון, furthermore, never refers to the will of God.

<sup>9</sup> Ps 29(30),6.8 is the only case in which רצון is rendered by θέλημα outside of the formulas עשה רצון and עשה כרצון. The רצון is here the רצון of God and was understood to mean his will by the LXX.

Greek equivalents (εὐδοκία, δεκτός).<sup>10</sup> This divergence in translation is all the more noteworthy inasmuch as the primary meaning of רצון is not "will", but "favour", "what is pleasing to", "agreeable to". עשה רצון = τὸ θέλημα ποιεῖν thus seems to be a fixed formula for doing God's will.

When one further recalls that עשה רצון של מקום or עשה רצון are consecrated formulas of the Palestinian Synagogue for "doing the will of God",<sup>11</sup> one may well ask whether the expression was not somewhat of a technical term when the LXX came into being. The Rabbinical writings in which our formula is found<sup>12</sup> belong, of course, to a later period, but they may well reflect the usage prevalent in Jewish traditions which are much more ancient.<sup>13</sup> To this one must add that the formula עשה רצון was already current at the time when some of the Qumran texts were being written.<sup>14</sup>

*The meaning of עשה רצון—ποιεῖν τὸ θέλημα in the OT and Judaism*

In the OT and even more so in later Judaism, "to do God's will" is to observe the Law. Ps 39(40),9 (a Psalm which was used in the early Church) gives this thought its clearest expression: τοῦ ποιῆσαι τὸ θέλημά σου, ὁ θεός μου, ἐβουλήθην καὶ τὸν νόμον σου ἐν μέσῳ τῆς κοιλίας μου. The identification of the will of God (in the sense of what God wills and demands from man) with the Law is axiomatic for later Judaism.<sup>15</sup> The Law is the revelation and concrete expression of God's will. The identification is so complete that the Rabbis (in the texts quoted above) do not even bother to specify that they are speaking of the Law when they speak about Israel doing God's will. The Law need not be mentioned explicitly (although this is frequently the case):<sup>16</sup> every Jew knows that to do God's will is to observe the Law.<sup>17</sup>

The texts of Qumran, where עשה רצון (in the sense of doing God's will) occurs, may be taken as an illustration of this point. Those who do the will of God (עושי רצונו) are those who "convert" to the Law (השבים לחורה), as revealed to the Sect, the community of the elect (cf. 4QpPs37 1,2-5). This same community

<sup>10</sup> The LXX uses χάρις and ἀρεστός, which are more in keeping with the meaning of רצון, quite rarely. The usual terms used by the LXX are δεκτός and εὐδοκία..

<sup>11</sup> Cf. G. Schrenk, *TWNT* III, 54; II, art. εὐδοκία, 742, 41ff.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *Str.-Bill.*, I, 414 e; 467; 653, 664f.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Moore, *Judaism*, I, 131-132; Braun, *Radikalismus*, I, 15f.

<sup>14</sup> IQS 9,13.23; 4QpPs37, 1,5; 1QSb 1,1.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. H. Cazelles, *DBS* V, art. "Loi Israélite", 420ff; Braun, *Radikalismus*, I, 2.

<sup>16</sup> Cf., v.g., Test N 3,1f; Test D 6,6 and the texts from Qumran where God's רצון is immediately connected with the Law (IQS 5,1-3.8-10; 9,13-17.23-25; 4QpPs37 1,3-5) or where "doing one's own will" is opposed to keeping the commandments or Covenant of God (CD 2,21; 3,2f.7f.11f; 11,4).

<sup>17</sup> The will of God is expressed in the individual precepts of the Law and in the Law as a whole. It is understandable that the LXX should reflect the accentuation of the "nomistic" tendency in Judaism by preferring the plur. θελήματα to the sing. θέλημα, substituting the plur. to the Heb. sing. at times (see above). This tendency disappears in the NT, where the plur. θελήματα is found only at Act 13,22 in an OT quotation (Mk 3,25 is textually dubious).

is described a few verses later as those who do the Law (עושי התורה—vv. 14f), an expression which is also found at 1QpH 7,11; 8,1; 12,4). The two occurrences of עשה רצון at 1QS 9,13.23 have much the same meaning. The context indicates that “to do God’s will” is to observe his ordinance (1QS 9,23), that is to say: the Torah of Moses as interpreted, enlarged upon and lived by the Sect (cf. 1QS 5,8ff), for it is to the Community that God’s will (the hidden meaning of the Torah) has been revealed. They keep the Covenant and “search” his will (1QS 5,9) by constant study and scrutiny of the Torah (1QS 6,6f; 8,14f) in order to attain to that wisdom which allows one to do God’s will (1QS 9,13). 1QSb 1,1 contains a blessing which is to be given to those who do the will of God (עושי רצונו), who keep his commandments (שומרי מצוותיו) and cling to his holy Covenant (ברית). In CD, as we have pointed out, we find “doing one’s (own) will” (עשה רצון) opposed to obeying God’s commandments and keeping the Covenant (i.e., opposed to doing God’s will),<sup>18</sup> or “choosing”, “following” one’s (own) will (רצון) opposed to keeping God’s commandments.<sup>19</sup> (The opposition recalls Jn 6,38, where Jesus says that he has not come to do his own will, but the will of him who sent him!)

Before analyzing the use and meaning of ποιεῖν τὸ θέλημα (τοῦ θεοῦ) in Jn, we can already say that, in the light of OT usage (as illustrated by the MT and the LXX) and of the usage found in later Jewish writings (Rabbinism and Qumran in particular), there can be little doubt that the Jews to whom Jesus is speaking (viz., those to whom Jn is addressing his Gospel?) would understand these words as a reference to “doing the Law”. That this association was intended by Jn is shown by the explicit reference to “doing the Law” at 7,19 and is also borne out by the pronounced Johannine tendency to use expressions which distinctly recall Jewish “legalistic” terminology (that of Qumran in particular) more than any of the Synoptics, including Mt.<sup>20</sup>

#### B) (Ποιεῖν) τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ in Jn

The typical Johannine formula is τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με (4,34; 5,30; 6,38.39; 7,17—αὐτοῦ = τοῦ πέμψαντός με of v. 16). Once we find τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πατρός μου (6,40)—in the immediate vicinity of τοῦ πέμψαντός με (6,38.39). Ποιεῖν τὸ θέλημα (τοῦ θεοῦ) is found at: 4,34; 6,38; 7,17; 9,31. At 5,30 we have ζητεῖν τὸ θέλημα.

The one who “does” or “seeks” the will of God is always Jesus, even where this is not explicitly stated (6,39.40). There are only two cases in which τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ (= τοῦ πέμψαντός, τοῦ θεοῦ, respectively) does not have Jesus but “men” as subject: 7,17 and 9,31. Jn 9,31, however, enunciates a general principle which is applied

<sup>18</sup> Cf. CD 2,21; 3,12.

<sup>19</sup> CD 3,2f.7f.11f.

<sup>20</sup> See what is said below, concerning the ἔργον of Jesus, pp. 372ff.

to Jesus. Thus, it is only at 7,17 that doing the will of God is not related to Jesus.

a) *The "will of God" and Jesus—Jn 6,37-40; 17,1-4; 4,34; 9,31*

aa) *Jn 6,37-40*

When we seek to understand the nature of the will of God in Jn, there are two verses which immediately come to our assistance: 6,39.40. They give us an accurate "definition" of the will of the Father.

The verses are found in what may be considered a unit: 6,(36). 37-40.<sup>21</sup> The connection of v. 36 with vv. 37-40 is very loose. Vv. 37-40 give the impression of a compact unit<sup>22</sup> the theme of which is the will of the Father (a thought which is conspicuously absent in v. 36). In two parallel members, v. 37 presents the activity of the Father and that of the Son: a) everyone the Father gives to Jesus comes to him; b) Jesus does not cast out him who comes to him. The reason for the perfect correspondence of this double activity is given in v. 38: Jesus has come to do the will of the Father, not his own will. He can therefore not cast out him whom the Father gives him. The Father's (and the Son's) will is now explained in two verses which are strictly parallel:

|        |                                              |        |                                                              |
|--------|----------------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6, 39a | τοῦτο δέ ἐστιν τὸ θέλημα<br>τοῦ πέμψαντός με | 6, 40a | τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν τὸ θέλημα<br>τοῦ πατρὸς μου                  |
| 6, 39b | α) ἵνα πάν<br>β) ὁ δέδωκέν μοι               | 6, 40b | α) ἵνα πᾶς<br>β) ὁ θεωρῶν τὸν υἱὸν καὶ<br>πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν |
|        | γ) μὴ ἀπολέσω ἐξ αὐτοῦ                       |        | γ) ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον                                          |

<sup>21</sup> Bultmann (173f) treats vv. 36.37a.38-40 as an artificial unit (i.e., a unit in which the evangelist has edited the Quelle) which belongs after 6,45. Barrett considers vv. 37-40 "a unity". Brown (275) also views them as a unit that may have had a history of its own and which is loosely connected with the discourse on the bread of life. X. Léon-Dufour ("Trois chiasmes johanniques", *NTS* 7 (1961-62) 111-119) sees a chiasmic construction in vv. 36-40, which underlines their unity.

<sup>22</sup> The chiasmic construction seen in vv. 36-40, which would make of them a unit, seems unacceptable to the writer. Vv. 36.40 and 37.39 can hardly be considered parallel. It is true that ὁρᾶν and πιστεύειν (v. 36) are taken up by θεωρεῖν and πιστεύειν (v. 40), πάν ὁ διδωσίν μοι and μὴ ἐκβάλω ἔξω (v. 37) by πάν ὁ δέδωκέν μοι and μὴ ἀπολέσω (v. 39), but v. 36 can hardly be said to correspond to v. 40. In v. 36 there is question neither of the will of the Father nor of eternal life or resurrection. The ἵνα πᾶς ὁ θεωρῶν ... καὶ πιστεύων is only parenthetical, as important as it may be.

6, 39c ἀλλὰ ἀναστήσω αὐτὸ  
ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ

6, 40c καὶ ἀναστήσω αὐτὸν (ἐγὼ)  
ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ

The  $\delta$  δέδωκέν μοι of v. 39b is expanded and explained in v. 40b by:  $\delta$  θεωρῶν τὸν υἱὸν καὶ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτόν. The two formulas are equivalent. The first stresses the action of the Father, the second the act of man (which is the gift of God at the same time). Those who are "given to" Jesus are those who "come to" him (6,37.65; comp. 6,44). "Coming to" Jesus and "believing", on the other hand, are synonymous (cf. 3,21; 5,40; 6,35; 7,37, etc.), so that "those who are given to" Jesus are those who "believe" or "see" him.<sup>23</sup> Eternal life is promised indiscriminately to those a) who come to Jesus (5,40), b) who believe in him (3,15 and *passim*), c) who see him (and believe in him) (6,40.47), d) who are given to him (17,2).

The negative  $\mu\eta$  ἀπολέσω of v. 39b becomes the positive  $\epsilon\chi\eta$  ζωὴν αἰώνιον in v. 40b. Again the two are equivalent. \* $\epsilon\chi\eta$  ζωὴν is equivalent to δώσω αὐτῷ ζωήν.<sup>24</sup> Jesus does not permit one to be lost ( $\mu\eta$  ἀπολέσω) by giving one eternal life (δώσω αὐτῷ ζωήν) which the recipient then has ( $\epsilon\chi\eta$  ζωήν).

An attentive consideration of vv. 39b.40b makes clear that one cannot interpret either statement as if the will of the Father were that one believe in the Son. The final clause in both cases is "that (they) ... should have eternal life ... not be lost". We shall see, however, that the will of God is also that one believe (6,28; 7,17). The thought is already implied in vv. 39b.40b, where it is he who believes (who is given to Jesus) who has eternal life.

We may conclude that, at both 6,39 and 6,40, the will of the Father is to give eternal life (now and on the last day) and that he does this through Jesus ( $\mu\eta$  ἀπολέσω, δώσω αὐτῷ ζωήν =  $\epsilon\chi\eta$  ζωήν). The thought is a "Leitmotiv" of the Fourth Gospel. The Father carries out his salvific will in Jesus, Jesus realizes the will of the Father by giving life to the world. The will of the Father thereby dominates the whole  $\epsilon\rho\gamma\omicron\nu$  of Jesus, his whole mission.<sup>25</sup> The whole

<sup>23</sup> Cf. 10,29 and esp. 17,2.6.9.24. The verbs of sight  $\acute{o}\rho\alpha\iota$ , θεωρεῖν and θεᾶσθαι are at times used by Jn to indicate the "vision" of faith. Cf. Bultmann, *Theologie*, 425.

<sup>24</sup> Jn prefers to use ζωὴν  $\epsilon\chi\epsilon\iota\nu$  (3,15.16.36; 5,24.40; 6,47.53.54; 10,10; 20,21) although he also uses the equivalent expression ζωὴν διδόναι (6,33; 10,28; 17,2).

<sup>25</sup> It is no coincidence that the Johannine equivalent of the Matthean τὸ θέλημα

salvific work of Jesus is but the expression and realization of God's will—which is to give eternal life (to those who believe).<sup>26</sup>

The Father sent the Son into the world to carry out his salvific design (will) which is a) to save from death and destruction (6,39b), b) by giving eternal life (6,40b).<sup>27</sup> Jesus alone has the *ἐξουσία* to carry out the salvific will of God. At the end of his ministry, Jesus can recall that the Father has given him *ἐξουσίαν πάσης σάρκος, ἵνα πᾶν ὁ δέδωκας αὐτῷ δώσῃ αὐτοῖς ζωὴν αἰώνιον*. At the supreme hour, Jesus claims that the glorification of God (and his own glorification) is achieved in the communication of eternal life which is “knowledge” of the Father and of the Son whom he sent. This having been achieved (in principle), Jesus can say : *τὸ ἔργον τελειώσας ὁ δέδωκάς μοι ἵνα ποιήσω*.

bb) *Jn 17,1-4*

This is a key passage for understanding the “will of God” and Jesus' relation to this will.

V. 2 refers back to 6,39.40, being a fusion of the two verses :

17,2b *ἵνα πᾶν ὁ δέδωκας αὐτῷ δώσῃ αὐτοῖς ζωὴν αἰώνιον*  
 6,39b *ἵνα πᾶν ὁ δέδωκέν μοι*      6,40b *ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον*

At the same time, 17,4 refers back to 4,34 :

17,4 *τὸ ἔργον τελειώσας ὁ δέδωκάς μοι ἵνα ποιήσω*  
 4,34 *ἵνα ποιήσω τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με καὶ τελειώσω αὐτοῦ τὸ ἔργον*.

Jesus could just as well have said, at 17,4 : *τὸ θέλημά σου ἐποίησα*. The will of the Father is that Jesus give life to believers, but Jesus does so by accomplishing the *ἔργον* entrusted to him.<sup>28</sup> In this *ἔργον*

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τοῦ πατρός μου is τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με. What Mt looks at from the point of view of the divine fatherhood of God, Jn considers from the point of view of the “mission” of Jesus. Cf. Schrenk, *TWNT* III, 55, 14ff.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Mussner, *ZΩΗ*, 75ff.

<sup>27</sup> This thought is expressed in the most forceful way in Jn 3,16-17, but dominates the whole Gospel. It has been said that the Fourth Gospel is summed up in the word *πιστεύειν* (Jn 1,12; 20,31). One could also say that it is contained in the word *ζωή*. The Prologue opens with *ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν* and the Gospel closes with *ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται ἵνα πιστεύσητε ... καὶ ζωὴν ἔχητε* (20,31).

<sup>28</sup> See below, pp. 372ff.

(through this *ἔργον*) he reveals himself and the Father (cf. 17,6-8) and renders possible that knowledge of the Father and the Son which is eternal life (17,3).

cc) *Jn 4,34*

The equivalence τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με ποιεῖν — τὸ ἔργον τοῦ πέμψαντός με ποιεῖν is affirmed explicitly at 4,34. The verse will retain our attention for a moment (we will return to it when we consider the use of *ἔργον* in *Jn*).<sup>29</sup>

The relation between the two members of the *ἵνα*-clause is one of identity. Lightfoot<sup>30</sup> is right when he paraphrases: "the Father's will, which consists in the fulfilment and completion ... of a work, *namely* the salvation of the world". (I underline). The *τελειώσω* should not be interpreted as if Jesus were saying that the will of the Father is that he bring to completion the work begun, but rather that he do and complete the work entrusted to him, to give eternal life.

From these texts we may conclude that *the "will of God" for Jesus in the Fourth Gospel is that he give eternal life (to believers): Jesus "does the will of God" by fulfilling the mission (ἔργον) entrusted to him.*<sup>31</sup>

*Ποιεῖν τὸ θέλημα* in the case of Jesus seems to have lost all relationship to the Law, even though the terminology recalls the "doing of the Law". Did *Jn* wish to imply that, for Jesus, the "will of God" is no longer bound to the Law? The terminology would seem to point in this direction, but, fortunately, we have a text which leaves little doubt that this was, indeed, the intention of the evangelist: *Jn 9,31*.

We have said that this is the only text, besides *Jn 7,17*, in which τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν does not have Jesus as subject. This is only partially correct (as we pointed out), because the general principle is being applied *to Jesus*, who is presented as the one who does the will of God. Precisely because it represents a general (Rabbinical) principle, it is most revealing.

<sup>29</sup> See below, pp. 384ff.

<sup>30</sup> Comm., 145.

<sup>31</sup> Westcott holds that the aor. emphasizes the end and not the process. Lightfoot rightly points out that the work is "also complete at every step and stage of his obedience to, and fulfilment of, the Father's will and purpose". Cf. also Bultmann, ad loc., n. 3.

dd) *Jn 9,31*

The context is important. As we attempted to show above,<sup>32</sup> we have here an official confrontation between the “disciples” of Moses and the “disciples” of Jesus (9,28), which takes on the form of a Rabbinical debate. The disciple of Jesus is speaking the language of the Pharisees to the Pharisees.

The Pharisees have come to the conclusion that Jesus is a “sinner” (9,24). *Ἀμαρτωλός* is taken as the exact opposite of “one who does the will of God” :

|                             |                                 |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>ἀμαρτωλῶν ὁ θεὸς</i>     | <i>οὐκ ἀκούει, ἀλλ’ ἐάν τις</i> |
| <i>τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιῇ</i> | <i>τούτο ἀκούει.</i>            |

For the Pharisees a “sinner” is one who violates the Law (habitually) and Jesus seems to be doing just that (9,16). The man born blind, quoting a principle well known to the Rabbis,<sup>33</sup> affirms that Jesus is not a “sinner” but one “who does the will of God”. In such a context, “to do the will of God” must have the meaning “to do the Law”. This is the meaning of the general principle quoted, yet, in order to affirm this in the face of the flagrant violation of the Sabbath which has just taken place, the *τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν*, when applied to Jesus, must mean something else and something more than the simple observance of the Law as understood and practised by the Pharisees (who would never dream of allowing that one who violates the Sabbath does “the will of God”). In other words: the general principle “God hears those who do his will (keep the Law)” takes on a deeper meaning when applied to Jesus. At the same time, the fact that Jn uses an expression which has such a strong “nomistic” connotation shows a polemical tendency which cannot be ignored. At 9,31 (and elsewhere in the Gospel): *Jn wishes to make clear that the “will of God”, with the coming of Christ, has dissociated itself from the Law as interpreted and practised by orthodox Judaism.*

To the Jews (orthodox Judaism), who affirm that Jesus was an apostate and a violator of the Law, Jn opposes that Jesus “did the will of God” not by following the Law in the traditional sense, but in a much more elevated sense: by fulfilling it. To the Pharisees

<sup>32</sup> See pp. 24ff; 101; 105ff.

<sup>33</sup> See pp. 21-24 and n. 41; *Str.-Bill.*, I, 653; II, 534 (ad Jn 9,16 B); 535 (ad Jn 9,31).



the healing of the blind (and that of the cripple) on the Sabbath discredits Jesus—it goes against the Law, the will of God as they understand it. To Jn (Christians) the healing of the man born blind was “doing the will of God”—the illness was there *ἵνα φανερωθῇ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ* (the healing of the cripple was explicitly presented as the fulfilment of the Law).<sup>34</sup> The Jews are reasoning as if Jesus were not the Son of God, who is above the Law through direct communion with the Father; their understanding of the “will of God” (and the Law) is insufficient.

The will of God for Jesus is not expressed in the Law (in the traditional sense) because the will of the Father is manifested directly to him, or rather: because the will of God *is* the will of Jesus. Jesus does not do the Law in the traditional sense because the will of God for him is not that he follow the prescriptions of the Law, but that he give life to the world by doing the “work” entrusted to him directly by God. His “work” (even on the Sabbath!) is the fulfilment of the Law in the sense that the Law too is (was) the expression of God’s salvific will. Because Jesus does the Father’s will, his activity (and that of his disciples, see below) cannot be said to go against the Law in its essential meaning and value.

Jn is not opposing the will of God and the Law (he *is* opposing the will of God and the Jewish understanding of the Law), nor is he dissociating the will of God entirely from the Law. He rather traces the Law back to its source (the will of God) and frees the will of God from an understanding of the Law which was bound to certain prescriptions Jesus and the Christian community did not consider binding (the expression of God’s will for them); more important still: he affirms that the Law no longer has the position it once had of mediating the divine will. In “the last days” the will of God is expressed directly to Jesus and, through Jesus, to his followers.

b) *The “will of God” and man—Jn 7,17*

Jn 7,17, as was mentioned, is the only text in the Fourth Gospel where someone other than Jesus is (invited) to do the will of God.

To begin with, we must point out that the text does not say, “If one does the will of God”, but, “If one is willing to do the will of

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<sup>34</sup> See pp. 158ff.

God". The verb *θέλειν* stresses that "doing the will of God" requires active commitment on the part of man (cf. 5,40; 8,44), an act of the will for which man is responsible. "Doing the will of God" will follow upon this act, but is not identical with it.

What is the "will of God" which Jesus is inviting the Jews to do? In view of what has been said in the sections which dealt with Jn 7,14-18 and Jn 7,19,<sup>35</sup> we believe we are justified in affirming that Jesus is not inviting the Jews to do the Law, at least not in the traditional sense of the expression.

Our exegesis of Jn 7,14-18 showed that Jn presents the "teaching" of Jesus as "revelation", a teaching which goes beyond (and yet does not contradict) anything to be found in the teaching of Moses, of whom Jesus is not a disciple. When Jesus affirms that the will to do the will of God will disclose the true nature and origin of his teaching, he can hardly be referring to anything but faith. It is faith alone which discloses that Jesus is the Revealer and that his teaching is of God. One must hold (with Bultmann, Barrett, Brown) that "to do the will of God" at 7,17 means "to believe". But what of the opinion of those who maintain that *τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν* refers to the observance of the Law and which receives such massive support from the meaning *τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ* and *τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν* have in the Jewish tradition? <sup>36</sup>

Jn obviously holds that only faith can lead to the recognition of Jesus and his teaching; yet he uses an expression which recalls the observance of the Law! Jesus (Jn) is not inviting the Jews to do the Law in the traditional sense of the expression. Jesus (Jn) would hardly have denied that the Jews were willing to do the Law in the "orthodox" sense. The "traditional" interpretation and observance of the Law (that of the Pharisees at the time of Jesus, that of "normative" Judaism—which was also Pharisaical—at the time of Jn), far from leading the Jews to recognize the divine origin of Jesus' διδαχή, led them to reject him as a *πλάνος*, far from leading them to accept him as ἀληθής (the Revealer), led them to seek to murder him (7,19) and his followers (16,2). Yet Jesus *is* inviting them to do the Law or, at least, is inviting them to do the will of God in such terms as to imply that this will (that men believe on the Son) is the

<sup>35</sup> See pp. 87ff; 130ff.

<sup>36</sup> See what has been said above, pp. 369ff.

same will expressed in the Law so that, by doing it, the requirements of the Law are also in some way met. "To do the Law" is no longer to observe the Law as the Jews do.

Jn wishes to show that the will of God for man, with the coming of Christ, has dissociated itself from the Law as interpreted and practised by orthodox Judaism. Whereas the Jews consider belief in Jesus a betrayal of the Law, Jn points out that it is the will of God and, as accomplishment of the divine will, cannot be opposed to the Law. Once again Jn is tracing the Law back to its source and doing away with the opposition between the Law and belief in Jesus. At the same time he is declaring the bankruptcy of the Jewish interpretation of the Law (and consequent attitude towards Jesus): he who does the will of God by believing on Jesus does the Law!

## 2. Τὸ ἔργον (τὰ ἔργα) τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν

It has become apparent that "doing the will of God" for Jesus is closely linked to "doing the work" (ἔργον) entrusted to him, commanded him<sup>37</sup> by the Father. We also saw that "the will of God" for man is that he believe. Now, at 6,28f, as we shall see, faith is called τὸ ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ. There is a close correlation between τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν and τὰ ἔργα (τὸ ἔργον) τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν both in the case of Jesus and in that of men. Such a correlation corresponds perfectly to that found in the Jewish tradition, where "works" (ἔργα, מַעֲשִׂים) and the "will" or "command" (מִצְוָה, רִצּוֹן—θέλημα, ἐντολή) of God are so closely related that they are almost synonymous.<sup>38</sup> The only difference between Jn and the Jewish

<sup>37</sup> See below, pp. 384ff.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. E. Lohmeyer, "Probleme paulinischer Theologie, II, 'Gesetzeswerke' ", *ZNW* 28 (1929) 177-207; *Str.-Bill.*, III, 161. Lohmeyer writes: "Das Wort 'Werk' ... trägt ... den gleichen Sinn wie Gebot oder Norm und unterscheidet sich von diesen Ausdrücken nur dadurch, dass der Begriff des Gebotes den Gedanken einer für sich bestehenden Geltung oder eines hinter ihm liegenden Ursprunges, der des Werkes aber den Gedanken einer bleibenden Aufgabe ausprägt. Aus diesem Zusammenhang heraus wird es begreiflich, dass 'Werk' selbst mit 'Gesetz' oder 'Gebot' synonym werden kann" (182). "Nicht nur enthält also in jüdischer Anschauung das griechische Wort 'Werk' den Sinn Gebot, sondern auch das rabbinische Wort 'Gebot' den Sinn von 'Werk'. Beide Begriffe sind mit einander vertauschbar" (183). On the synonymity *Gebot*—*Gesetz* in the Apocrypha, cf. further Rössler, *op. cit.*, 46f.

terminology is that, in the latter, the “will of God” and the “work(s)” God demands are the two poles of the “Gesetzesfrömmigkeit”!

*Tà ἔργα, τὸ ἔργον* (τοῦ θεοῦ) *ποιεῖν*, like *τὸ θέλημα* (τοῦ θεοῦ) *ποιεῖν*, is an expression which has deep roots in the Jewish tradition. As in the case of *τὸ θέλημα* (τοῦ θεοῦ) *ποιεῖν*, one must ask whether Jn has not taken over one of his key notions (*τὰ ἔργα, τὸ ἔργον* (τοῦ θεοῦ) *ποιεῖν*) from Judaism and modified it to suit his theory.

A) *Tὸ ἔργον, τὰ ἔργα* (τοῦ θεοῦ) *ποιεῖν*—עשה מעשה, עבודה  
in the OT (MT and LXX) and in the Jewish tradition

“The will of God” in the OT indicates primarily God’s salvific will as manifested in the Covenant. In attempting to define the theological meaning of “Covenant”, Eichrodt<sup>39</sup> has pointed out that it is in the Covenant that a clear divine will becomes discernible, the Covenant being at one and the same time “Förderung” and “Verheissung”. The “Heilswille” of God is what is expressed in the Covenant; God chooses a people and moulds them to his will. The deliverance from Egypt, of which the Covenant is the purpose and consummation, reveals God’s being and his will—the power of God manifested in this event is offered for permanent enjoyment, while the behaviour of the beneficiaries is subjected to definite standards.

Within this framework, the salvific will of God expresses itself in his “works”. *מעשה*—*ἔργον* in the OT indicate the activity of God in history (and in creation)—his mighty deeds which consist in giving life. God’s “opus proprium” is “vivificare”. The reverse side of this “work” is the condemnation and punishment of evildoers (those who reject his Covenant) — God’s “opus alienum”. Thus, *מעשה יהוה* (מעשה (ה)אלהים) in the MT,<sup>40</sup> *ἔργα θεοῦ, κυρίου* in the LXX,<sup>41</sup> recur very frequently to indicate *the works God does*.

The two terms in question can also be used to designate *the “works” man does*. *ἔργον, מעשה* (עבודה, מלאכה) are used in the sense of “material tasks” commanded by God, such as the building of the Ark,<sup>42</sup> the rebuilding or restoration

<sup>39</sup> *Theol.*, I, 10-15.

<sup>40</sup> *מעשה (ה)אלהים* = Ex 32,16; Eccl 7,13; 8,17; 11,5

*מעשה יהוה* = Ex 34,10; Dt 11,7; Jos 24,31; Judg 2,7; Jer 51,10.

*מעשי יהוה* = Ps 107,24; 111,2; 118,7.

<sup>41</sup> *ἔργα* (τοῦ) *θεοῦ* = Ex 32,16; Tob 12,6,7,11; Ps 63,9 (MT 64,9 *פועל אלהים*); Ps 65,5 (MT 66,5 *פועלות אלהים*); Ps 77,7 (MT 78,7 *מעללי אל*); Ep Jer 51 (*ἔργον θεοῦ*); 2 Macc 3,36.

*ἔργα* (τοῦ) *κυρίου* = Ex 34,10; Dt 11,7; Jos 24,31; Judg 2,7 (*ἔργον*); Jer 28(51),10; Ps 27,5 (MT 28,5 *פועלות יהוה*); 45,8 (MT 46,9 *פועלות יהוה*); 76,11 (MT 77,11 *עלילותיו*); Prov 16,5 (MT 16,4 *פועל יהוה*); Sir 11,4 (Heb. *פועל*); 39,16 (Heb. —); 39,33 (Heb. *מעשה*); 42,15 (Heb. *מעשה*); Dan 3,57; Est 4,17; Ps 106(107),24; 110(111),2; 117(118),17.

<sup>42</sup> See the frequent occurrences in Ex 25-31 and 35-40.

of the Temple,<sup>43</sup> or of the walls of Jerusalem.<sup>44</sup> Of greater interest are those instances in which *ἔργον* (עבודה, מלאכה, מעשה) designates cultic or liturgical service.<sup>45</sup> It is in this connection that the expressions *ἔργα κυρίου*, *τοῦ κυρίου*, *θεοῦ* are found<sup>46</sup> to express works (of cultic service) performed by man. In the strict sense we are dealing with "service" rather than with "deeds" (עבודה, not מעשה —as the MT of Num 8,11 indicates).

מעשה—*ἔργον* as the "works" man does

Already in the MT מעשה, in the sense of "works of man", often has a negative connotation.<sup>47</sup> In the LXX the negative aspect of such *ἔργα* is even more accentuated.<sup>48</sup> This pessimistic outlook does not apply to all the works of man, for there are some that God commands. The pair עשה... שמר, φυλάσσειν (ἀκούειν) ... ποιεῖν is regularly used by the Deuteronomic current when speaking about the "commandments" (מצוות, דברים, etc.) of God,<sup>49</sup> and עשה צדקה is the technical phrase for fulfilling the commandments of the Law.<sup>50</sup> The will revealed by God in the Covenant, as we have said, was both "Verheissung" and "Forderung". Under both these aspects it dominates the life of his people in every

<sup>43</sup> Cf. 2 Chron 24,12.13; 34,10.12.13; 1 Esd 5,58; 7,2.3.15.

<sup>44</sup> Neh 2,16; 4,11(5); etc.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Num 3,7.8; 4,3.4.16.23.27.30; 8,11.15.19; 1 Chron 23,4.24.28; 25,1; 29,1.5.6.7; 2 Chron 29,34f; 1 Esd 7,2.3.9.15; 2 Esd 3,8.9; 6,7.22; Neh 10,33(34); 11,12.16.22; 13,10.

<sup>46</sup> Num 8,11: LXX ἐργάζεσθαι τὰ ἔργα κυρίου

MT לעבד את עבדת יהוה

Comp. Jn 6,28. 1 Esd 5,56; 7,9.15: *ἔργα τοῦ κυρίου*. The expression τὰ ἔργα (τοῦ) κυρίου is equivalent to: τὸ ἔργον (τοῦ) θεοῦ (cf. 2 Esd 6,7; A reads: τὸ ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ); τὰ ἔργα (τοῦ) οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ (2 Esd 6,22); τὰ ἔργα ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ τοῦ θεοῦ (1 Esd 5,56); τὰ ἔργα λειτουργίας οἴκου κυρίου (1 Chron 23,24) or τὰ ἱερὰ ἔργα (1 Esd 7,3). It should be noted that Hag and Zech consider the construction of the Temple as "Glaubens- und Bekenntnisstat" (Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 235) and that Judaism does not distinguish between "cultic service" and "moral deeds". Cultic service is as much part of the revealed will of God as moral obligations. Cf. Moore, *Judaism*, II, 6-8.

<sup>47</sup> Ex 23,24; Lev 18,3; Dt 31,29; 1 Sam 8,8; 1 K 16,7; 2 K 23,19; 2 Chron 17,4; 34,25; Neh 6,14; Job 33,17; Ps 28,4; 106,35.39; Jer 7,13; 25,6.7.14; 32,30; 44,8; Thren 3,64; Am 8,7; Mic 6,16; Hag 2,14.

<sup>48</sup> Besides texts where *ἔργον* in the LXX translates מעשה, which in the MT already has a "negative" connotation (Ex 23,24; Dt 31,29; 1 K 16,7; 2 K 23,19; 2 Chron 17,4; 34,25; Ps 27(28),4; 105(106),35.39; Jer 7,13; 25,6; 51(44),8; Am 8,7; Mic 6,16), the LXX also translates other pejorative terms with *ἔργον*. Thus רעה in Jer 44(51),9 is rendered (in A) by *ἔργον*, and תרעבה (Prov 13,19) also receives the same translation. For further examples, cf. G. Bertram, *TWNT* II, art. *ἔργον*, 641, 26ff. The affirmation (*ibid.*) that תונוות in Ez 23,43 is "einfach mit *ἔργον* wiedergegeben" is false. LXX Ez 23,43 reads *ἔργα πόρνῆς* not *ἔργα*.

<sup>49</sup> Dt 4,6; 5,1.32; 6,3.25; 7,11.12; 8,1; 11,32; 12,1.32 (MT 13,1); 13,18(19); 15,5; 16,12; 17,10; 24,8; 26,16; etc. Jos 22,5; 23,6; etc.

<sup>50</sup> Gen 18,19; Ps 106,3; Prov 21,3; Is 56,1; 58,2; Jer 22,3.15; Ez 18,5.19.21.27; 33,14.19.

aspect, prescribing what is to be done, prohibiting what is not to be done. Thus *ἔργον*, מעשה, are found as a designation for what we would call "religious" or "moral" deeds. The *ἔργα*—מעשים which are in conformity with the laws and statutes are good, those which are not are evil.<sup>51</sup>

Although in the OT the thought of works done in conformity with the Covenant-Law being "of God" (godly works) is certainly behind such texts as Num 16,28 and Is 26,12, we were able to find only two texts in which the "works" man is called upon to do are called "works of God": Jer 48 (LXX 31),<sup>10</sup> ארור עשה מלאכה יהוה רמים—ἐπικατάρατος ὁ ποιῶν τὰ ἔργα κυρίου ἀμελῶς and Bar 2,9 (δικαίος ὁ κύριος ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ, ἃ ἐνετείλατο ἡμῖν).

As the religion of Israel becomes more and more legalistic, ever greater emphasis will be given to the religious life seen under the aspect of good vs. evil works. In the writings of later Judaism the tendency to shift the centre of attention from the will of God to the commandments themselves, as "works" to be done, comes unmistakably to the fore.<sup>52</sup>

The Rabbinical writings use the word "works" as a technical term to indicate the works prescribed by God in the Law.<sup>53</sup> מעשה (*opus*) is frequently used in this sense and is sometimes found with the adjective טוב not in the sense of "works of mercy" (*Liebeswerke*) but of "good works" as opposed to works of godlessness.<sup>54</sup> The technical term, however, is not מעשה but מצוה.<sup>55</sup> The distinction between "work" and "command" has become very fluid—"work" designating the task entrusted to be completed and "command" the origin of the task entrusted.<sup>56</sup> Thus not only does the Greek word *ἔργον* have the sense of "command", but the Rabbinical מצוה has the sense of "work" (*ἔργον*) so that the two become equivalent terms.<sup>57</sup>

The use of *ἔργον* in the *Apocrypha* also witnesses to this. "Work", "law" or "command" can be used interchangeably.<sup>58</sup> The *Apocrypha* insist on the doctrine of "works"<sup>59</sup> and *ἔργον* becomes a standard term for the "works of the

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Ex 18,20; Dt 31,29; 2 Chron 17,4; 30,21.

<sup>52</sup> Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 238-241; Gutbrod, *TWNT* IV, 1050.

<sup>53</sup> See the texts quoted by *Str.-Bill.*, III, 160ff.

<sup>54</sup> "Einigermal hat man diesem מעשים noch das Adjektivum טובים beigelegt, nicht um sie damit als sogen. 'gute' Werke ... zu bezeichnen, sondern als schöne, rechte Werke im Gegensatz zu den bösen Werken der Gottlosigkeit". *Str.-Bill.*, III, 161 (texts quoted).

<sup>55</sup> "Zu einer allgemein gebrauchten Bezeichnung für Gesetzeswerke sind die Ausdrücke מעשים oder טובים מעשים nie geworden. Der eigentliche Terminus technicus dafür ist מצוה". *Str.-Bill.*, III, 161.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Lohmeyer, *art. cit.*, 182. See above, p. 379, n. 38.

<sup>57</sup> Lohmeyer, *ibid.*, 183 (see above, p. 379, n. 38). Cf. in the same sense *Str.-Bill.*, III, 161: "מצוה" bedeutet a) Gebot = ἐντολή, b) das aus der Gebotserfüllung resultierende Werk = ἔργον νόμου" (texts quoted).

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Test L 19,1 (comp. Test N 2,6); Test D 5,1 (comp. Test Z 10,2); 6,9; Test A 6,3; Test B 10,3; 2 Bar 48,38.

<sup>59</sup> We have only to think of the heavenly "tablets" of Jub on which the unchangeable laws on the one hand and the deeds of men on the other are written. In eth Hen we

Law".<sup>60</sup> Particularly interesting are two texts in which the expression *ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ* occurs: 4 Esd 7,24 and Test L 19,1.

Among the sectarian literature of later Judaism the texts of Qumran deserve special attention as the possible background for the use of *ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ* in Jn. As is to be expected from a sect which lays so much stress on the observance of the Law, both the verb *עשה* and the substantive *מעשה* have a prominent place in these writings. Seldom used in a sense which is "neutral", the "doing" (*עשה*) of men, their "works" (*מעשים*) are either good or bad. The criterion is whether they are in conformity with the Law of Moses (the will of God, his commandments, his Covenant, etc.), as interpreted by the Community, or not.<sup>61</sup>

1QS gives a representative illustration of the "doctrine of works" found in Qumran. In order to be saved one must be prepared to do (*לעשות*) what is good before God (1QS 1,2), to cling to all good works (*לדבוק מעשי טוב* 1QS 1,5), to do what God has commanded through Moses and the prophets (1QS 1,3). This means to separate oneself from the men of wickedness in order to belong to the Community of the Law (1QS 5,1f), "to convert to the Law of Moses according to all He has commanded ... according to all which was revealed of it (the Law) to the Sons of Zadok, the priests" (1QS 5,8f), or to be disposed *לעשות חוקי אל* (1QS 1,7f). It is on the basis of one's "works" that one is admitted and belongs to the Community or not (1QS 5,11-19). The novice is examined concerning his understanding of and his works in the Torah (*בתורה מעשיו* 1QS 5,21; comp. 6,18). This criterion is also that which is used for assigning a rank to the members of the Community (1QS 5,23f). It is only in the Community of the Torah that one is able to observe the Law in its entirety and therefore lead a life (of deeds) which is pleasing to God (1QS 9,24). By so doing one separates oneself from the "men of the lot of Belial" and their evil deeds (*מעשי רשע*) (1QS 2,5), from the "men of unrighteousness" (*אנשי העול*) who have not sought and searched in God's "commandments" (*בחוקיהו*) (1QS 5,10f), whose works are dirt before God (*מעשיהם לנדה לפניו* 1QS 5,19) and who are destined to eternal destruction (1QS 5,12,19). To these belong those members of the Community who are not faithful to the oath they swore upon entering (1QS 2,11ff; comp. 5,8f), who do not take the words of the Covenant seriously and walk in the hardness of their heart (1QS 2,13f). There is no weighing of good deeds against evil deeds —all God commands is to be done.<sup>62</sup> Obedience, the principle of unity, must be

also find the heavenly tablets which are not, however, primarily a "Gesetzbuch", but contain the record of men's deeds and their future fate. 2 Bar claims that the righteous are saved by their works (51,7), which are those of the Law (51,8; comp. 51,3; 67,6 and 4 Esd 9,7; 13,23). The works go before the righteous and are stored up for them (24,1; comp. 4 Esd 7,77; 8,33); the just trust in their works and are heard by God (63,3,5; 85,2); their works merit for others (2,2; 6,27; 14,7; 85,10).

<sup>60</sup> 2 Bar 57,2; 4 Esd 7,24; Test L 19,1; Test B 5,3; etc.

<sup>61</sup> For accurate lists of the occurrences of *עשה* and *מעשה* in the "neutral", "positive" and "negative" senses as found in 1QS, CD and 1QpH, cf. Braun, *Radikalismus*, I, 24, nn. 2, 3; 99, nn. 3, 4; 101, n. 5; 54, n. 2. *עלילות* is used rather sparingly. Another term which is tied in with the doctrine of "works" is *הלך*. It is very frequent in CD, 1QH, 1QM and 1QS.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Braun, *ibid.*, I, 27-30; esp. 28 with n. 2.

total—the member of the Sect falls away and is lost unless he does all God has commanded. The “doctrine of works” we have just traced in IQS is to be found also, with minor differences, in IQpH,<sup>63</sup> CD,<sup>64</sup> and, so far as we were able to determine, in the other texts of Qumran, notably IQH.

In the Qumran texts, an expression is to be found which corresponds exactly to the Johannine *τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ*. *לַא מַעֲשֵׂה* is found relatively frequently (IQS 4,4; IQH 5,36; CD 1,1; 2,14; 13,7) and authors such as F.-M. Braun<sup>65</sup> have seen a connection between Jn 6,28 and IQS 4,4. H. Braun, however, is certainly right when he rejects this view<sup>66</sup> on the basis that IQS 4,4 speaks of the works God does and not of the works he demands of man. In a recent article, R. Bergmeier,<sup>67</sup> while accepting H. Braun's conclusion with regard to IQS 4,4, shows that CD 1,1f and 2,14f speak of the works that God demands from man (viz., the “works” he reveals to man and predestines him to do). From these two texts (and Test L 19,1) the author tries to draw a rigorous parallel between CD 2,14-15 and Jn 6,28f; 8,41ff.

The two texts of CD (and that of Test L) offer good parallels for the Johannine usage, but we believe it is unwarranted to trace Jn 6,28f back to these writings. Excessive weight should not be laid on the genitive (*τοῦ θεοῦ*). The *idea* of the works God demands runs through all the writings of later Judaism and this is sufficient to account for the Johannine usage. The view which would consider *ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ* as a fixed formula and demand *exact* formal parallels does not take account of the fact that the genitive (*τοῦ θεοῦ*) simply makes explicit the idea already present in the Jewish concept of the “works” (God demands—“of God”) and cannot be considered a constitutive element of a “fixed formula”. We have only to think of the Pauline expression *ἔργα τοῦ νόμου* which has no exact verbal parallel in the Rabbinical writings but definitely derives from Rabbinical Judaism.<sup>68</sup> The idea conveyed by *ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ* is not exclusive to Qumran, nor is the expression, for that matter. In our opinion the Johannine *ἔργα* (*ἔργων*) *τοῦ θεοῦ* at 6,28f is certainly derived from the concept of the “works” God demands of man (in the Law), which is common to later Judaism (and hence also found in Qumran). No more can be said and no more need be said.

### B) *The ἔργων (ἔργα) τοῦ θεοῦ and Jesus—Jn 4,34*

The meaning of the *ἔργων* and *ἔργα* of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel (and their mutual relationship) has already been referred to in a

<sup>63</sup> Braun, *ibid.*, I, 54-57.

<sup>64</sup> Braun, *ibid.*, I, 90ff; esp. 99-112. The “goodwill” of man receives less emphasis in CD; cultic ritual is given greater emphasis than in IQS.

<sup>65</sup> “L'arrière-fond judaïque du 4<sup>e</sup> Évangile et la communauté de l'alliance”, *RB* 62 (1955) 5-44, 18f.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. *Qumran und das Neue Testament* (Tübingen, 1966), I, 119.

<sup>67</sup> “Glaube als Werk? Die ‘Werke Gottes’ in Damaskusschrift II, 14-15 und Johannes 6,28-29”, *RQ* 6 (1967-69) 253-260.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. *Str.-Bill.*, III, 160ff.



previous section.<sup>69</sup> The question concerning the ἔργον (ἔργα) of God Jesus "does", which we wish to raise here, is very restricted: in describing the activity of Jesus as τὸ ἔργον (τὰ ἔργα) τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν, is Jn once again reflecting "nomistic" terminology and giving it a radically new scope and breadth of meaning? The question cannot be dismissed lightly.<sup>70</sup> Erudite pages have been written about the ἔργον and ἔργα of Jesus, yet, to our knowledge, no one has given a thorough development to an aspect of the matter which would be obvious to a Jew. The frequency with which Jn uses the verb ποιεῖν (and ἐργάζεσθαι) in a specifically religious sense to speak of the activity of men required by God and, what is even more important, the frequent use of the substantive ἔργον (ἔργα), especially as object of the verbs ποιεῖν (and ἐργάζεσθαι), places the Johannine terminology on firm Jewish ground and makes the Fourth Gospel, in this respect, more "Jewish" than the Synoptics.<sup>71</sup>

Jn presents the "work" of Jesus in terms which would recall "legal piety", whether he was conscious of the fact or not. *But there is at least one text which explicitly brings to mind that the "doing of the work of God" by Jesus is being contrasted with the "doing of the Law".* We are thinking of Jn 4,34.

The text has already been alluded to when we treated of "doing the will of God", but we preferred to treat the passage more fully in conjunction with the ἔργον of God Jesus does. Since the two members of the ἵνα-clause are absolutely equivalent, since "the will of God" Jesus "does" is that of "doing the work of God" (see below), what is said concerning τὸ ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν is equally valid for τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν.

The verse belongs to what is probably an isolated unit (vv. 31-34) of Johannine stamp, which has been cleverly woven into the Samaritan episode.<sup>72</sup> Using his favourite technique of "misunderstanding", Jn weaves a little dialogue which leads up to the words of Jesus reported in v. 34. The ἵνα-clause is equivalent to an exegetical infinitive and

<sup>69</sup> See what is said on pp. 152ff.

<sup>70</sup> Lohmeyer (*art. cit.*, 196) has called attention to the fact that it is only in Jn that "work" embraces the whole life and activity of Jesus and remarks: "Es ist ein kleines Zeichen seines ursprünglich jüdischen Geistes".

<sup>71</sup> On this cf. Braun, *Radikalismus*, II, 30-31 and the tables given on p. 7. A comparison with Jn makes him the most Jewish of the Gospels.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Dodd, *Hist. Trad.*, 325-327; 391ff. Bultmann (143, n. 1) also points out the composite nature of Jn 4,31-38 and treats vv. 31-34 as a unit.

is the subject of ἔστιν.<sup>73</sup> The καί equates the two members of the ἵνα-clause.<sup>74</sup> The sense of the clause does not change considerably whether the present (ποιῶ) or the aorist (ποιήσω) is preferred.<sup>75</sup> *Doing the Father's will, which is to bring to perfection the work of God, is Jesus' βρῶμα.*<sup>76</sup>

To affirm that "doing the will of God" is Jesus' "food" or sustenance means more than to affirm that his strength and joy come from his mission.<sup>77</sup> It means that it is unthinkable that Jesus should have life in himself, live independently of the Father. It is as Son (as sent by the Father), in virtue of an unbroken identity of will and purpose, that Jesus has life in himself and has the power to give life.<sup>78</sup>

Is there an allusion to the Law in this verse? The terminology makes such an allusion possible. We have only to think of what has been said concerning τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν and ἔργον, ἔργα ποιεῖν (the τελειοῦν is in no way opposed to the verb ποιεῖν but rather adds the notion of "consummation"; comp. 17,4). There is, however, a much clearer indication that Jn is thinking in terms of the Law: the similarity between the thought expressed here and that which is found at Dt 8,3 (LXX): οὐκ ἐπ' ἄρτῳ μόνῳ ζήσεται ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ παντὶ ῥήματι τῷ ἐκπορευομένῳ διὰ στόματος θεοῦ.

According to von Rad,<sup>79</sup> the whole point of the "feeding with manna", as presented by Dt 8,3, was precisely to teach Israel that man does not live by earthly food alone, but also by the "word" of God. The outlook in Dt is different from that of JE or P, which we find in Ex 16, and should be interpreted in the light of the Deuteronomical theology of the "word" which gives life to Israel (Dt 30,15;

<sup>73</sup> Cf. *Blass-Deb.*, § 393,6; 394. Schlatter (ad loc.) refers to the similar usage at Jn 11,50 and 16,7.

<sup>74</sup> So Lightfoot, Zahn, Brown, vs. Lagrange and Hoskyns.

<sup>75</sup> Lagrange, Bultmann, Thüsing (*Erhöhung*, 51) prefer the pres. to the aor.; the aor. would be due to the influence of τελειώσω. The pres. would stress the continual, lasting obedience.

<sup>76</sup> The words βρῶμα — βρῶσις occur at Jn 4,32.34; 6,27(bis).55. They are equivalent, as is shown by Jn 4,32.34, where they are used interchangeably. Lagrange points out that βρῶμα may have been used at 4,34 instead of βρῶσις because of the assonance with θέλημα.

<sup>77</sup> So Bernard. Lagrange, in the same sense, speaks of "principe d'énergie".

<sup>78</sup> Loisy, 462; Dodd, *Interpretation*, 254; 389.

<sup>79</sup> *Das fünfte Buch Mose*, ATD 8 (Göttingen, 1964), 51.

32,37). When we examine the term λόγος (דבר), we shall see that it plays a central role in the Deuteronomic theology and that it indicates either the single "commandments" of the Law or the Law as a whole (as set forth in Dt).

Von Rad's interpretation of אל-כל-מוצא פיהו יהיה האדם, which is that of the LXX,<sup>80</sup> seems to commend itself.<sup>81</sup> The context (Dt 8,1-6) insists on obedience to the commandment(s). The word מצוה occurs three times (8,1.2.6); it opens and closes the unit, forming a sort of inclusion. Man's true life is sustained by God's word-commandment (the Law).<sup>82</sup> It is obedience or disobedience to this "word", to this "commandment" (the Law) which is, not metaphorically but in the proper sense, a question of life or death for man.<sup>83</sup> The command itself can therefore be looked upon as "food", as "bread", for it sustains and gives life (to those who obey it).

Dt 8,3 was well known to the primitive tradition, if we are to judge from the fact that it is referred to both by Jn and by the Synoptics (Mt 4,4 = Lk 4,4) and this strengthens the force of the assumption that Jn 4,34 refers to Dt 8,3. Mt 4,4 quotes Dt 8,3 explicitly and, when one compares Jn 4,34 with Mt 4,4, it becomes apparent that we are probably dealing with a "logion" of Jesus which is derived from a common tradition.

In Mt 4,4 the context is that of the temptation in the desert. Satan tempts Jesus to disobey God for the sake of "earthly bread". Our Lord answers that man does not live by bread alone but by every word which proceeds from the mouth of God. Jesus is affirming (as is indicated by the context) that obedience to God—to his "words" or "commandments"—is of more "vital" importance than material food, for "Is not life more than food?" (Mt 6,25 = Lk 12,23).

Jn 4,34 differs from Mt 4,4 (Dt 8,3) in many respects. In Jn : 1) Jesus does not

<sup>80</sup> The LXX uses ῥήμα not in the sense of "thing" but of "word" (and possibly of "command"). Λόγος, ῥήμα, ἐντολή (LXX)—דבר, מצוה (MT) are practically synonymous in Dt. See what is said on this below, Chapters Twelve and Thirteen.

<sup>81</sup> H. Cazelles, in the *Bib de Jér* (ad loc.), translates : "tout ce qui sort de la bouche ...", but comments : "Yahvé ... fait vivre les Israélites par les commandements (miçva) qui sortent (moça) de sa bouche".

<sup>82</sup> S. R. Driver (*Deuteronomy*, ICC (Edinburgh, 1960), 107) and H. Junker (*Das Buch Deuteronomium*, (Bonn, 1933), 52) also hold that Moses' words emphasize the necessity of obedience to the Law, but they fail to bring out the thought at 8,3.

<sup>83</sup> J. L. McKenzie, who also proposes the translation "word" for Dt 8,3, insists that the use is not "metaphorical". The word which creates is also the word which determines how man should live. To reject this word is death. Cf. "The Word of God in the Old Testament", *TS* 21 (1960) 183-206, 203-204 and n. 34.

enunciate a general principle (i.e., "man does not live, etc."), but speaks exclusively of himself, in the first person. 2) The "words" (commandments) which come forth from the mouth of God become: the will of God. 3) The adversative construction: οὐ (μόνον) ... ἀλλά disappears. 4) The word *ἄρτος* does not appear. 5) *Τελειοῦν τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ* is added. These divergences, however, do not affect the profound similarity of the two texts. 1) In Mt Jesus is applying the general principle to himself. Although no such principle is enunciated in Jn (but rather presupposed), the substance of what is said is the same. 2) The "words which come out of God's mouth" designate his commandments. Jn traces these back to their origin: the will of God. 3) The adversative construction serves to oppose earthly food (bread), which sustains life, to the "commandments" of God (*implicitly* also considered as "bread" or "food") which sustain true life. The opposition is also found in Jn 4,31-34. The food the disciples offer Jesus is opposed to the "food" by which Jesus "lives": the will of God. Jn has made explicit the identification: "word" (will) of God—"food", already present in Mt 4,4 (Dt 8,3). 4) The more generic *βρῶμα* (*βρώσις*) has substituted *ἄρτος*. The difference is negligible, bread being the "basic" nourishment of man. Jn perhaps wished to avoid *ἄρτος* because of the eucharistic meaning it will be given in chapter 6. 5) The addition *τελειοῦν τὸ ἔργον*, being equivalent to *τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιεῖν*, does not alter the basic meaning of the saying.

We are in agreement with Dodd: Jn 4,31-34 "has surely strong claims to be accepted as derived from a common tradition",<sup>84</sup> i.e., from a tradition common to Jn and the Synoptics (Mt 4,4; Lk 4,4). The parallel we have drawn between Mt 4,4 (Dt 8,3) and Jn 4,34, which has shown that the variations in Jn are easily explained, strengthens these strong claims and makes an allusion to Dt 8,3, considered a possibility by many authors,<sup>85</sup> more than a mere possibility. What is no more than a possibility is that Jn also had the context of Dt 8,3 in mind. The *βρώσιν ἔχω φαγεῖν ἣν ὑμεῖς οὐκ οἶδατε* strangely recalls *καὶ ἐψώμισέν σε τὸ μάννα ὃ οὐκ εἶδешαν* (LXX); *וְאֵלֶּיךָ אֶחָד־הֶמְן אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדַעַתָּ* (MT). The *ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ* (viz., *τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ*) Jesus does recall the fulfilling of the "word", "command" (Law) which comes forth from God's mouth and which is described as "food" in the OT (and in Rabbinism).<sup>86</sup>

Elsewhere Jn will use other terms, which also recall the keeping of the Law, to describe the relationship of Jesus to the Father and his will. Jesus "keeps" the "word" of the Father—*τὸν λόγον (τοῦ θεοῦ) τηρῶ* (Jn 8,55; see below),<sup>87</sup> and "keeps" the "commands"

<sup>84</sup> Dodd, *Hist. Trad.*, 326-327.

<sup>85</sup> Cf., for example, Loisy, 362; Barrett, ad loc.; Brown, 173; Bernard, ad loc.

<sup>86</sup> See what is said on the "bread of life" in Chapter Fourteen.

<sup>87</sup> Pp. 412ff; esp. 421f.

of the Father—τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ πατρὸς τετήρηκα (Jn 15,10; see below).<sup>88</sup> When one asks, however, whether the ἔργα (ἔργον) Jesus does have anything to do with the “works of the Law”, the answer must be a definite “no”. There is a sense in which the “work” of Jesus fulfills the Law, but it is certainly not in the traditional sense of “observing the precepts of the Law” or “doing the works the Law commands”. The “work(s)” and the “will of God” Jesus does no doubt recall the “works of the Law”, but the terminology serves to indicate something quite different in Jn.

The “will of God” is at the basis of Jesus’ activity not as “Law” but as vital communion of will and purpose. Jesus is the Son, who lives and acts in total communion with and dependence upon the Father. The “works” Jesus does are not those of a pious Jew, fulfilling the “precepts” of the Law, but part of the one “work” which he alone, as Son of God who acts in total unity with the Father, can accomplish: the gift of life (τὸ ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ),<sup>89</sup> the end towards which the Law tended. In *this* sense the “work(s)” of Jesus is (are) the fulfilment of the Law.

C) *The ἔργα (ἔργον) τοῦ θεοῦ and man—Jn 6,28-29; 8,39*

The will of God is done by Jesus in that he gives life to the world; man must be disposed to do the will of God if he is to have eternal life. The two “acts” (that on the part of Jesus (God) and that on the part of man) are two aspects of one and the same reality. When it comes to “doing the work(s) of God”, the same relationship maintains: Jesus does the work of God, which is to give life to the world, man does the work of God by accepting in faith the gift of life. In so doing, he furthermore participates in the very work of Jesus.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Pp. 438ff; esp. 445f.

<sup>89</sup> In this respect the Johannine usage is very similar (except for the christological dimension) to that of the OT. The “opus proprium” of Jesus is “vivificare”; his “opus alienum” is the condemnation and punishment not of “evildoers”, but of those who refuse to accept the life he gives (by believing on him). The analogy with the OT presentation of God’s “work(s)” goes so far as to embrace even the ἔργα — σημεῖα. In the OT they manifest God’s power to give life; in Jn they manifest the unity of Jesus with the Father (his identity as Son of God who shares in the divine activity and power).

<sup>90</sup> See below, pp. 399ff.

The question we wish to raise once again is : does Jn present the ἔργα (ἔργον) τοῦ θεοῦ *man* is called upon to do in terms which recall the doing of the Law? From the point of view of terminology, remarks analogous to those made above concerning the ἔργον of Jesus can be made. Although not quite so frequently as in the case of Jesus, Jn lays stress on the verb ποιεῖν (ἐργάζεσθαι) and frequently uses the substantive ἔργα (ἔργον) as object of this verb. He also refers to “doing the Law”, “doing the will of God”, “keeping the word”<sup>91</sup> and “keeping the commandment(s)”<sup>92</sup>. There can be little doubt that, here too, we are on “nomistic” Jewish ground.

*There are two texts which rather explicitly bring to mind that the “work(s)” the Jews are called upon to do by Jesus (God) is (are) being contrasted with the “works” demanded by the Law—Jn 6,28-29 and Jn 8,39.*

a) *Jn 6,28-29*

*The context.* After the multiplication of the loaves, the Jews are seeking Jesus (ζητεῖν v. 24). Jesus tells them that they are seeking him (ζητεῖν v. 27) for the wrong reason. The reference to “working for perishable food” (v. 27) is to be understood in the light of the double ζητεῖν. The crowd has been searching after more perishable food by eagerly following Jesus and seeking him out.<sup>93</sup> The bread Jesus gave has parabolic significance. Their endeavours and search should therefore be of another nature. They are told to “work for” (“earn”, “acquire”) the heavenly food<sup>94</sup> the Son of man will give. It must be worked for, but it is given. The paradox must be maintained (see below, on v. 29) if the analogy with “working for perishable food” is not to be suppressed, but the contrast between “work for”, and “will give” is important. The ἐργάζεσθαι earns what is ultimately “given” as a free gift.

The gift the Son gives is the bread from heaven which, as we shall

<sup>91</sup> See below, pp. 412ff.

<sup>92</sup> See below, pp. 438ff.

<sup>93</sup> The interpretation of Hoskyns, whereby v. 27 has no connection with the feeding of the 5,000 but springs from “the straightforward fact that the Galilean peasants work and ... receive their sustenance from those for whom they work”, takes no account of the immediate context.

<sup>94</sup> We are reminded of 4,34, where the βρῶμα (βρῶσις v. 32) of Jesus, as opposed to the βρῶμα, τροφαί the disciples have gone to buy (4,8), is to do the will of God.

see, symbolizes his teaching-revelation. Once this reference to the teaching-revelation of Jesus is seized, it is clear that Jesus is inviting the Jews to acquire the food which lasts to eternal life (the "word" of life) by believing on him. This thought is given development in the following verses.

*Exegesis.* The verb ἐργάζεσθαι, used by Jesus at v. 27, has retained the attention of the crowd. It has an unmistakable shade of meaning in the Jewish tradition. Although Jesus (Jn) has used it in the sense of "earning", "acquiring", the Jews interpret it in another sense. Jn is using his favourite device of misunderstanding. Jesus had asked the Jews to "earn" the bread that they will be given; they take up the ἐργάζεσθαι and use it at v. 28 with the meaning "to perform", "to do" the "works of God".<sup>95</sup> The Jews are thinking in terms of the works of the Law. Jn has them address Jesus as they would Moses. One is reminded of Ex 18,20, where Jethro says to Moses: διαμαρτυρῇ αὐτοῖς τὰ προστάγματα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὸν νόμον αὐτοῦ ... καὶ τὰ ἔργα, ἃ ποιήσουσιν.

Notwithstanding the terminology, which is so strongly Jewish, notwithstanding the meaning such terminology has in the Jewish tradition and the fact that it is the Jews who are addressing Jesus (using their own terms of reference, which will be corrected by Jesus—Jn), some authors refuse to see in these words any reference to the works of the Law. Thus, Lagrange<sup>96</sup> adopts the view (also held by Loisy and Schanz) that the ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ the Jews are enquiring about do not refer to the works of the Law, but to "œuvres spéciales". The reason given by Lagrange is that the Jews need not enquire about the works of the Law "car ces œuvres ils croyaient les connaître par la Loi". The fallacy of such an approach is evident. The matter should be viewed from the dramatic, literary and theological perspective of the evangelist. The Jews question Jesus in terms of "works" to be "done" (the works of the Law)<sup>97</sup> in order to allow him to give the answer he does—which does away with the Jewish terms of reference (the Law) and substitutes a totally new

<sup>95</sup> Bultmann (162, n. 8) writes that such a "geistreiches Wortspiel" does not become the crowd! The "Wortspiel" is not of the crowd but of Jn, and he shows elsewhere that he is well able to play on words.

<sup>96</sup> Comm., ad loc.

<sup>97</sup> Odeberg (256) rightly remarks: "The imperishable food was to the Jews the works commanded by God in the Tora". See what is said on this in Chapter Fourteen.

criterion for the attainment of eternal life (of the heavenly bread which gives eternal life).

Jesus gives an answer which is not in line with the conception of the crowd (the Jews). *The ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ* is to believe on Jesus; God does not demand "works" (of the Law), as the crowd is inclined to believe, but *a* work: faith. The terms Jesus uses take up the Jewish terminology of the Law but, through a clever shift from the plural to the singular,<sup>98</sup> the novelty of the new dispensation is brought to the reader's attention.

Some authors refuse to see in the genitive of τὸ ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ anything but a "genitivus auctoris".<sup>99</sup> Faith in the work *God* does. The break with the Jewish mentality, expressed in v. 28, would be even more radical: to the many "works" God demands from men (*Leistungsfrömmigkeit*), Jn would be opposing the one "work" *God* does. Such an interpretation, as valid as it may be from a certain point of view, does not take sufficient account of the context, which emphasizes the active part man must play in the plan of salvation;<sup>100</sup> it further disregards the fact that already in Judaism the *ἔργα* man accomplishes at the behest of God are considered to be, at one and the same time, the work of God and the work of man (see below).

God demands that man do but one work: believe on the one whom he sent. Jn is saying that the work God demands from man (and works in him), in order that he attain eternal life, is faith; at the same time Jn is relating this "work" to the "works" of the Law and considering them in a relationship of continuity rather than opposition (although a certain opposition is present inasmuch as the "work" replaces the "works of the Law"). The works of the Law have been replaced and find their fulfilment in faith, but faith is an *ἔργον*! The perspective of Jn is not that of James, who demands "works" *as well as* faith. For Jn faith itself is a work, *the* work. Jn's terminology is obviously not that of Paul, who would hardly have called faith a "work". The relationship in Jn is rather one of continuity than of opposition. He seems to be trying to present faith as that

<sup>98</sup> The change from the plur. to the sing. is understood as being meaningful by most authors (Hoskyns, Westcott, Bernard, W. Bauer, Loisy, Zahn, etc.). Bergmeier (*art. cit.*, 259) writes it down as a stylistic variation. We take another view than that of Bergmeier both here and in the case of ἐντολή and λόγος, where the passage from the plur. to the sing. is also not without significance (see below).

<sup>99</sup> Thomas, Schlatter, Barrett, Bultmann.

<sup>100</sup> See the penetrating remarks of Zahn, *ad loc.*



which absorbs and surpasses the works of the Law, rather than as something radically distinct and even opposed to the "works of the Law". For Jn the Law should lead to Jesus, the "works of the Law" to faith in Jesus!

Before going on to consider the relationship between the "work" man is called upon to do and the "work" God does, we would like to examine another text in which Jn expresses the same thought as at 6,28f : 8,39.

b) *Jn 8,39*

The context is particularly important because Jn 8,39-47 has "works" as its central theme—the "works" one does show whether one is "of God" or "of the devil".

The Jews have just claimed that Abraham is their father, Jesus answers : *εἰ τέκνα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐστε τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐποιεῖτε. What are the ἔργα of Abraham* to which Jesus is referring?

In Gen 26,5 God says, "Abraham obeyed my voice (שמע בקולי) and kept my charge, my commandments, statutes and Laws (מצותי ותורותי)". This text was seized upon by the Rabbis who concluded that Abraham knew both the written and unwritten precepts of the Law and kept them scrupulously<sup>101</sup>—even to the extent of observing such a minute point of law as that concerning the mixing of foods.<sup>102</sup> The figure of Abraham as faithful observer of the Law also appears elsewhere in the OT<sup>103</sup> and is found in the Apocrypha<sup>104</sup> and in Qumran.<sup>105</sup> Are these the "works" of Abraham to which Jesus is referring? If this is the case, our text would be correcting or modifying Jn 6,28-29, where the "works" demanded by God is the one work—faith.

Abraham was not only extolled for his observance of the Law, he was also held up as an example of faith. Gen 15,6 says, "And he (Abraham) put his faith in the Lord and it was reckoned to him as righteousness". This text did not pass unnoted. Although the

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Qid 4,14 (end); p Qid 4,66b,51; Joma 28b; Tanch B לך לך § 14 (36a); Aggad Beresch 13 (12b). All quoted by *Str.-Bill.*, III, 186.

<sup>102</sup> Cf. Moore, *Judaism*, I, 275; 276, n. 1; III, n. 46. Further *Str.-Bill.*, III, 205. Joma 28b quotes Gen 26,5.

<sup>103</sup> Sir 44,20; Jud 8,26; 1 Macc 2,52.

<sup>104</sup> 2 Bar 57,1ff; Jub 6,19; 24,11.

<sup>105</sup> CD 3,2f.

Rabbinical writings do not give faith the important place it occupied in the early period of the Synagogue,<sup>106</sup> Gen 15,6 is often quoted and Abraham is praised for his faith. The words of R. Schemaja (1st cent. B.C.) refer to Gen 15,6 : through his faith Abraham merited that God divide the sea. This interpretation of Gen 15,6 later became common;<sup>107</sup> the faith of Abraham is looked upon as a meritorious accomplishment, an *ἔργον* (Jn 6,29 !). In the Apocalypse of Abraham (beginning of the 2nd cent. A.D.) Abraham is presented as the first monotheist who finds his way from idolatry to the true faith.<sup>108</sup> Abraham was the figure of the first proselyte and missionary<sup>109</sup> whose task it had been to lead all men to the true faith,<sup>110</sup> as father of all proselytes. What may be of even greater weight for evaluating Jn's presentation of Abraham : Philo exalts Abraham and his faith<sup>111</sup> and makes explicit reference to Gen 15,6.<sup>112</sup>

One can understand how, in the NT, Abraham should become the model of faith. Paul, who quotes Gen 15,6 (Rom 4,3), lays great weight on the faith of Abraham as opposed to the works of the Law (Rom 4,1-16; Gal 3,1-18). Heb 11,8-10.17-19 presents Abraham as a man of faith. If James can affirm that Abraham was justified by his "works" (Jas 2,21), it is because his faith was completed by his works (2,22)—the thesis of James being : faith without works is dead. Precisely because Abraham is the prototype of faith for James also, he insists that Abraham had works which showed forth his faith. Would Jn be the only author in the NT to concentrate his attention exclusively on the (morally) good works (works of the Law) of Abraham ?<sup>113</sup> It would be rather strange,<sup>114</sup> especially in Jn.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. *Str.-Bill.*, III, 187 and the numerous texts from the Apocrypha which are quoted on 189ff.

<sup>107</sup> The texts are gathered by *Str.-Bill.*, III, 200. Cf. also Sjöberg, *Gott und die Sünder*, 43.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. A. Weiser, *RGG* I, art. "Abraham", 71.

<sup>109</sup> Cf. J. Jeremias, *TWNT* I, art. 'Αβραάμ, 8.

<sup>110</sup> *Str.-Bill.*, III, 188 and the texts quoted on 195f

<sup>111</sup> *De Abr.*, § 46, quoted by *Str.-Bill.*, III, 193, end. *Quis rer. div. her.*, §6; *De migr. Abr.*, § 9; cf. *Str.-Bill.*, III, 197.

<sup>112</sup> *Quis rer. div. her.*, § 18; *Legis alleg.*, 3, § 81. *Str.-Bill.*, III, 198.

<sup>113</sup> Vs. C. H. Dodd, "A l'arrière-plan d'un dialogue johannique", *RHPR* 37 (1957) 5-17. The texts quoted by Dodd (Mt 3,7-10 and Lk 3,7-9 in particular) make no reference to the works of Abraham. The thought is : physical descent from Abraham is of no value, good works are required. The inference : those are true descendants of Abraham who do the works of Abraham is found in Jn, but not in Mt and Lk.

<sup>114</sup> "Strangely enough, there is no recourse here to Abraham as a man of faith ..." Brown, 363.

Jn 6,28 might offer a precious indication for a correct understanding of τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ. There, to the question: "What are we to do to perform τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ?" Jesus answers: "Believe, this is the work of God". Could it be that Jn is using a similar procedure in 8,39ff? What "works" Abraham did, we are not told, but we are told what he would not have done (i.e., what cannot be considered (one of?) the ἔργα of Abraham): ... τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐποιεῖτε · νῦν δὲ ζητεῖτέ με ἀποκτείνειν ... τοῦτο Ἀβραάμ οὐκ ἐποίησεν. The desire to kill Jesus cannot be separated from the following: ἀνθρωπον ὃς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑμῖν λελάληκα ἣν ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ. The desire to kill Jesus is an enormity and contrary to what Abraham would have done *because* Jesus is the Revealer. As a man of faith, Abraham would have accepted Jesus, he would not have sought to kill him. The murderous intention of the Jews (the ἔργον which is not of Abraham) is but the manifestation of their lack of faith, as one can gather by comparing 8,40<sup>115</sup> with 8,45 (cf. also 8,37.46.47).

Because Jesus is the revelation of God the Jews do not believe and seek to kill him. Jesus therefore continues: ὑμεῖς ποιεῖτε τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν (8,41). Against the insinuation, which will become clear in v. 44, the Jews react. The assertion: ἕνα πατέρα ἔχομεν τὸν θεόν (8,41b), following immediately upon: ὑμεῖς ποιεῖτε τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν (8,41a), is equivalent to saying: "We do the works of God" (τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ). At 8,44 Jesus denies this flatly. "Αἱ ἐπιθυμίαι τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν (8,44) and τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν (8,41) are equivalent. The ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ (τοῦ Ἀβραάμ) are opposed to the ἔργα τοῦ διαβόλου. What the Jews do are the works of the devil: they do not believe, and seek to kill Jesus because they *so wish* (θέλετε ποιεῖν). If they wished to do the will of God (cf. 7,17),<sup>116</sup> they would believe (come to know that Jesus' "teaching" is "of God"—cf. 7,17). As it is, they cannot "hear" the revelatory word of Jesus and cannot understand the language he speaks (v. 43). Their father is not God (or Abraham). Their father is the devil for he was a murderer from the beginning (the Jews hate Jesus—v. 42—and seek to kill him—v. 40) and "has nothing to do with the truth"

<sup>115</sup> "Auch die Judenschaft verehrte Abraham als den Glaubenden. Um der Wahrheit willen den hassen, der sie sagt, weil er sie von Gott gehört hat, ist aber das vollständige Gegenteil zum Glauben". Schlatter, ad 8,40.

<sup>116</sup> Τὸ θέλημα ποιεῖν and τὰς ἐπιθυμίας ποιεῖν are parallel, but the latter has a negative connotation. Cf. Schlatter, ad 8,44.

(the Jews do not believe *because* Jesus speaks the "truth"—vv. 40. 43b.45).

The *ἔργα* of Abraham give way to the *ἔργον* he would not have done: to seek to kill Jesus because he speaks the "truth" (revelation). The *ἔργον* Abraham would do is, by implication, to hear the "word" of Jesus, to believe in Christ and love him as the perfect revelation of the God in whom he, Abraham, put his faith. For Abraham saw the day of Christ and rejoiced (8,56). Faith (and love), unbelief (and hatred, murderous intention), these are the *ἔργα* of Abraham (of God) and of the devil, respectively. To affirm, with Dodd,<sup>117</sup> that the main issue here is not faith but the morally good works of Abraham which the morally deviate Jewish-Christians are called upon to imitate, simply does not do justice to the text.

We seem to have moved away from any reference to the works of the Law! Yet Abraham is a faithful observer of the Law (as well as a believer) in Judaism and the plural *ἔργα ποιεῖν* points towards the works of the Law. When Jn 8,40.44 is compared with Jn 7,17.19 and 6,28f, the thought of the evangelist becomes clearer. At 8,40 the "work(s)" Abraham would not do is to seek to kill Jesus, a man who reveals the "truth". At 7,19 the Jews are accused of not doing the Law because they seek to kill Jesus, who is "truthful"! At 8,44 the *ἔργα* the Jews wish to do are the evil desires (the will) of the devil, hence they reject the "truth". At 7,17 Jesus says that only those who wish to do the will of God will recognize his teaching as revelation, as the truth (and accept it).

Now, at 7,19 we have seen that the rejection of Jesus, due to lack of faith, is presented as the rejection of the Law; at 7,17 to believe (faith) is presented in "nomistic" terms—as the doing of God's will; similarly, at 6,28f faith is presented as a "work" which recalls the "works" of the Law. Jn 8,39 presents the same ambivalence (which is not ambiguity). The "works" of Abraham would evoke, in the mind of a Jew, the keeping of the Law (the commandments of God), but the expression is susceptible of receiving the meaning: to have faith. Jn develops this second possibility and has Jesus affirm that

<sup>117</sup> Dodd (*art. cit.*) holds that, in inviting the Jews to do the works of Abraham, Jn is having Jesus invite Christians of all time not to say, "Lord, Lord", but to do "works" worthy of their calling. Jn would be stigmatizing the "dissolution morale" (11) of the Jewish-Christians. The main issue is not faith, but the morally good "works" of Abraham the children of Abraham are called to imitate. Only "la ressemblance morale avec Abraham ... a une valeur religieuse" (12-13).

the works of Abraham are to believe in the one the Father has sent, to love him and accept his word. Faith in the word of Jesus, however, is itself presented as the "work" Abraham, the faithful follower of the Law, would do (does).

### *Conclusion*

In its presentation of both the "work(s)" Jesus does and the "work(s)" man does, the Fourth Gospel is working with traditional Jewish categories and thereby disclosing the novelty of the situation Christ has inaugurated and the relationship of the new situation to Judaism. Christianity breaks away from the Judaism the Pharisees represent (the "normative" Judaism which opposes Christianity); it is in continuity with the essential values of Judaism.

Our investigation of the "works of God" in Jn would not be complete if we did not examine the relationship between the "work(s)" man is called upon to do and the "work(s)" of Jesus. Such an analysis reveals the full breadth of the transformation the traditional Jewish terminology has undergone in Jn; it also brings out more fully the continuity between the "work(s)" of God as presented by Jn and the Jewish tradition.

### *D) The "work" of faith and the "work" of Jesus (God)*

The equivalence between the "will of God" and the "work" of Jesus and between the "will of God" and the "work" of man has already been explained. What is the relationship between the "work" which is faith and the "work" of God whereby he realizes his divine will in Jesus?

The "work" of God (will of God) is the gift of eternal life in Jesus. Jn 6,39f shows that this gift of eternal life is given to those who believe in the Son. In the Fourth Gospel, ἔχειν ζωὴν αἰώνιον is very often linked with πιστεύειν εἰς τὸν υἱόν ((ἐν) τῷ υἱῷ).<sup>118</sup> Where "life" is not immediately related to faith, the idea is present. If Jesus' words are life (6,63.68), they are life for those who believe. Jesus gives life to his sheep, but his sheep hear his voice (10,10.28). Jesus is the life for those who believe on him (11,25.26b) because

<sup>118</sup> Jn 3,15.16.36; 5,24 (τῷ πέμψαντι). 40 (ἔρχεσθαι πρὸς = πιστεύειν); 6,40.47; 17,2 (πάν ὁ δέδωκας αὐτῷ = ὁ πιστεύων); 20,31.

eternal life is knowledge (which stems from faith) of the Father and the Son (17,3).

The will of God is fulfilled in the "work" of Jesus, which is to give eternal life, but the gift of life cannot be separated from faith. Faith is the act by which the gift of life is accepted and becomes effectual. That Jn should have used the same word (ἔργον) for faith and for the "work" of Jesus (of God) is significant. The gift of life is the "work" of the Father and the Son (but see below); faith is part of this "work", but it is also the "work" of man.<sup>119</sup>

When speaking of Jn 6,29, it was said that some authors treat the genitive τοῦ θεοῦ as a subjective genitive (the work God does) while others treat it as a sort of objective genitive (the "work" which man does and which has the will of God as its object). To solve the apparent dilemma, Bergmeier<sup>120</sup> has recourse to the idea of "predestination" contained in CD 2,2-13, which would be present at Jn 8,41-47 (and at Jn 6,28f). The "work(s)" Jn speaks about is (are) the "work(s)" man does, but they are "of God" insofar as "der Mensch entscheidet sich nicht zum Tun dieser ... 'Werke': er ist dazu prädestiniert".<sup>121</sup> Such a position is not faithful to Jn's thought on this point. The use of the verb θέλειν at 7,17 and 8,44 should not be overlooked. He who believes is the one who *wills* to do the will of God (7,17); those who do the "works" of the devil are those who *will* to do his evil desires (8,44). Furthermore, the context of 6,28f, as we have pointed out, represents an *invitation to earn* the heavenly food (by believing)—although this food is "given".

Although there are passages in Jn where there is a touch of "Prädestinationslehre", the background of the Johannine use of τὸ ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ is not the "Prädestinationslehre" of CD 2,2-13 or, if it is, it has been modified by the "christological" outlook according to which everyone "durch das Erscheinen des Sohnes gegen seine eigene Möglichkeit, sich neu zu bestimmen, als an den Sohn Glaubender ein neues Woher zum Heil bekommen kann".<sup>122</sup>

E. Lohmeyer has pointed out that, in the Jewish writings, all

<sup>119</sup> A. Vanhoye ("Notre foi, œuvre divine, d'après le quatrième évangile", *NRT* 86 (1964) 337-354) rightly emphasizes that "la foi n'est pas en notre pouvoir, car elle est œuvre de Dieu" (340) but that "Dieu réalise son œuvre en nous ... pas sans nous, mais bien par nous" (350).

<sup>120</sup> *Art. cit.*, 255-258, esp. 258 and 260.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 258.

<sup>122</sup> Becker, *Heil Gottes*, 231.

“work”, if it is to have any positive value at all, must have a double origin : God and man. The good works of men (the works which are in conformity with the Law) are worked by God and by man at one and the same time.<sup>123</sup> Such a background is sufficient to account for the Johannine view according to which faith is the “work” man does and the “work” God does also. Man must come to Jesus (the active element of believing is stressed), but only those come who are “drawn” by the Father (the receptive element is stressed). The will of God is that man believe, this is the “work” in man worked by God, which corresponds to the “work” of Jesus which consists in revealing himself and the Father. This double “work”, which is one and which has its origin in God, is the realization of God’s will : to give life to the world.

E) *The “work(s)” of the believer as a participation in the “work(s)” of Jesus*

Jn does not divorce faith and discipleship from the overall “Heilswerk” of Christ. Jesus grants eternal life to the believer in and through faith, but the believer (disciple) is thereby introduced into the work (ἔργον) of Christ in another respect : as participant in the ἔργον of Christ which is to give life to others (which does not imply that the disciple “gives” life the way Jesus does—see below. Only Jesus and the Father have life in themselves!).

We can therefore ask whether ἔργον in 6,28f (and in other passages such as 9,4; 14,12) does not have a deeper sense, i.e., the ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ which is to be “worked” is active participation in the ἔργον of Jesus (God) himself—that of bringing others to the knowledge of “truth” and thereby to “life”. The results of Thüsing’s investigations on this point are enlightening. He has shown that the disciples are called to take an active part in the “work” of Jesus or, better still : that the glorified Christ “works” in and through the disciples. The

<sup>123</sup> Commenting on Ps 89,17 and Ps Sol 16,9—τὰ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν ἡμῶν (μου) κατεύθυνον ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς (ἐν τόπῳ — λόγῳ ? — σου), Lohmeyer (*art. cit.*, 184) writes : “Der Genitiv, der dem Wort ἔργα hinzugefügt ist, ordnet es eindeutig dem Menschen zu, der es vollbringt oder vollbringen wird. Aber zugleich lautet die Bitte, dass Gott dieses ‘Wirken des Frommen bereite und bewahre’. So ist jedes ‘Wirken’, soll es göltig sein, gleichsam zweifachen Ursprunges : Gott wirkt es, und der Mensch muss es wirken oder wirkt es gleichfalls”. He goes on to say : “Diese Doppelheit des Ursprunges ... ist ... allgemein jüdischen oder wenigstens pharisäischen Glaubens”.

texts <sup>124</sup> in which this idea is expressed are : Jn 4,37-38;<sup>125</sup> 12,24-26;<sup>126</sup> 14,12;<sup>127</sup> 15,8,16;<sup>128</sup> 17,10.<sup>129</sup>

While agreeing with the interpretation Thüsing has given to these texts, we believe that he has not given sufficient attention to the role the word and faith have to play, if the disciples are to set forth and bring to fruition the work of Jesus. He is right in rejecting the opinion of those who would identify "bearing fruit" at Jn 15,8 with "virtuous acts" or "living faith",<sup>130</sup> but is it right to say that "there is no word of faith in the context"? <sup>131</sup> Does 15,7 not state that whatever the disciples ask will be done because the words of Jesus abide in them? <sup>132</sup> Once this has been said and the *ῥήματα* given the (correct) meaning of "Offenbarungsworte",<sup>133</sup> it is necessary to consider the possibility that "faith" may be present in 15,7. When such texts as 14,12 and 8,31 are compared with 15,7,8,<sup>134</sup> this becomes more than a possibility. We suggest and will attempt to show <sup>135</sup> that to remain in Jesus one must not only keep his *ἐντολαί* (*ἐντολή*) but also "keep his word" in faith. Both are closely related and both are conditions for bearing fruit.<sup>136</sup>

By remaining in Christ the disciples are given an active part in his *ἔργον* — *ἔργα*, their *ἔργα* are not to be distinguished from those of the Exalted. The *ἔργα* of the disciples are "Heilswerke" also. In Jn we are presented with a unified terminology : *ἔργον* has basically the same meaning whether it is Jesus or the disciples who "work". Jn 14,12 is the most enlightening text in this regard, but the same meaning underlies Jn 6,29; 8,39ff and 9,4 (this last text *can* be

<sup>124</sup> We give the main passages and refer to *Erhöhung* for a complete discussion of the texts.

<sup>125</sup> *Erhöhung*, 53ff; esp. 55.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 101-107; 128-129.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 114-115.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 107-114; 117-120; 122.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 102; 110; 119ff; 123ff; 130ff; 174-184; 186-190.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 107f.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 108, n. 2.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 117, n. 36.

<sup>134</sup> Thüsing himself mentions the parallelism between 15,7 and 8,31; *ibid.*, 120f.

<sup>135</sup> See below, pp. 500ff.

<sup>136</sup> The role of the "word" is brought out by Thüsing in his analysis of Jn 17 (174-192; esp. 185; 188) and Jn 16,7-15 (142-159), but he gives the keeping of the "word" no place in his "Table" (110) and in his analysis of "fruit-bearing".



interpreted in this way). Faith-love is the work (of God in man) which is at the basis of active participation in the "work(s)" of Christ.

There is in Jn no emphasis on "good" works in the sense of "virtuous" deeds. If Jesus can call his works *καλά* (10,32), the sense is not that of "Liebeswerke"<sup>137</sup> (cf. Mt 5,16; comp. 25,35-45) nor that of "morally beautiful" works<sup>138</sup> but, "Gotteswerke, indem sie den Menschen in die Gottesgemeinschaft stellen".<sup>139</sup> *Ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ*, *ἔργα καλά*, are the works which God works in Jesus and the disciples, realizing in them his salvific plan.

Opposed to the *καλὰ ἔργα*, the *ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ*, are the *πονηρὰ ἔργα* (3,19), the works of the world (7,7), of the devil and his children (8,41). They are not simply "evil deeds", in the ethical sense, but acts which express radical opposition to the *Heilswerk* (and the *Heilswille*) of God.<sup>140</sup> Jn associates the *πονηρὰ ἔργα* with hatred (3,19.20; 7,7 comp. 7,1) and murderous intent (8,44) which are the embodiment of disbelief and are not mere "evil deeds" in the ordinary sense of the term. Just as the "work" of Jesus (of the disciples) is to manifest the "truth" and "give life", the works of the devil (of the "Jews" and the "world") are to lead away from the "truth" (8,44.55), to death (8,44). The *πονηρὰ ἔργα* (like their counterpart, the *ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ*, *ἔργα καλά*) cannot be conceived of apart from the confrontation with the light, with Jesus.

### Conclusion

Jn has given the word *ἔργον* (*ἔργα*) a meaning which differs quite significantly from that which it has in Judaism. It indicates, first and foremost, the salvific work of Jesus: revelation which results in the gift of life (or condemnation). Jn describes the role Jesus (and men) has to play in carrying out the salvific design of God as "works" which God commands, as "doing the will of God". Here Jn reflects the terminology of Judaism, which is not yet fully developed in the OT. But the will of God for Jesus is the will of God expressed in the Law only in the sense that it expressed the same salvific will now

<sup>137</sup> Cf. Grundmann, *TWNT* III, 547.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 551, n. 47. In the same sense Rengstorff, *TWNT* VII, 247, 29ff and n. 328.

<sup>139</sup> Westcott, ad 10,32.

<sup>140</sup> To speak of "good works" and "faith", of "evil works" and "disbelief" (Brown, 148, and many authors) is insufficient.

expressed in the sending of the Son to accomplish the "work" of salvation.

The will of God for men is likewise no longer expressed in the "legal" prescriptions of the Law. Jn reduces the "works of the Law" to the one "work"—faith in Jesus. Through this faith and in virtue of the (resulting) communion of love with God and Christ in the brethren, man is given to share in the very "work(s)" of Jesus.

Is it a pure coincidence that the "work(s)" of Jesus and the disciples should have been given such prominence in the Fourth Gospel? Or was Jn rather taking up a term which was so important in Jewish thought and so laden with meaning in order to call attention to the continuity *and* separation which exists between the "old order" and the new era of man's relationship to God inaugurated by Jesus? If the considerations elaborated above are well founded, there can be no doubt as to the intention of the evangelist: the Law has been superseded—and its "works" as well. The *θέλημα* — *ἐντολή τοῦ θεοῦ* are no longer to be found in the Law; the *ἔργον* — *ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ* are no longer those of the Law; but neither Jesus nor his followers can be said to go against the Law, their *ἔργον* — *ἔργα* are the execution of the divine will!

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### THPEIN TON ΛΟΓΟΝ (ΤΟΥΣ ΛΟΓΟΥΣ)

The present enquiry does not wish to undertake the complex task of attempting to determine whether Jn derived the term λόγος from the Jewish or from the Hellenistic traditions. Our aim is much more modest. We wish to examine the possible origin of the Johannine formula τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους) and ask whether it cannot be considered an obvious allusion to “keeping the commandments, the Law”. We will further ask what meaning the expression has in Jn. From this investigation we hope to draw some conclusions as to the purpose Jn might have been pursuing in his use of the expression τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους). The enquiry will further help us to determine the meaning of τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς.

#### A) *The possible background and source of the Johannine expression τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους)*

##### a) דבר, λόγος in the OT (MT and LXX) and in the Jewish tradition

In his careful study on the “word of God” in the OT, O. Grether<sup>1</sup> provides invaluable material for understanding the meaning of the terms דבר—λόγος in the OT, in the Jewish tradition as a whole and, in our estimation, for interpreting the meaning of τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον in Jn. Although דבר יהוה, דברי יהוה, דברים are associated in the OT (we will consider the MT, but all that is said holds good for the LXX as well) with the prophetic word<sup>2</sup> in the overwhelming majority of cases, they are also found to designate the “words” of the Law (Gesetzesworte).<sup>3</sup> It is the latter usage which is the most ancient.<sup>4</sup> Both the

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<sup>1</sup> *Name und Wort Gottes.*

<sup>2</sup> דבר יהוה is a *terminus technicus* for the prophetic word of revelation. It is used in this sense 225 × out of 241 (Grether, 76).

דברי יהוה is found only 20 ×. Here again the predominant meaning is that of prophetic word (Grether, 78).

דברים, דבר indicate the prophetic word(s) in more than 3/4 of the (over) 300 cases in which דבר(ים) indicates the “word” of God (Grether, 78).

<sup>3</sup> דבר יהוה is found with the meaning “legal” word of God at Num 15,31; Dt 5,5; 2 Sam 12,9; 1 Chron 15,15; 2 Chron 30,12; 34,21; 35,6. Cf. Grether, 71-73. To which Ps 33,4 can perhaps be added (Grether, 75). דברי יהוה = “Gesetzesworte” : Esd 9,4; 2 Chron 29,15. דבר, דברים, not used in the construct state, frequently indicate the

Jahwist<sup>5</sup> and Elohist<sup>6</sup> traditions use the plural דְּבָרִים to indicate the Decalogue (the plural is used because the Law is composed of a multiplicity of individual precepts). Indeed, in the pre-Deuteronomic period, the Decalogue is always referred to as the עֲשֵׂת דְּבָרִים. The word דְּבָר is *strictly reserved for the Sinaitic Law*, which is considered direct revelation of God and the "Law" *par excellence*.<sup>7</sup> Not even the blessings and the curses attached to the commandments come under the heading דְּבָרִים. The notion of "divine word" arises from this usage. In Dt, the plural דְּבָרִים is used to indicate the Decalogue, in keeping with the usage found in J and E, but is now extended to indicate other laws and precepts.<sup>8</sup> דְּבָרִים is used in the construct state with terms which designate the whole body of legal precepts.<sup>9</sup> The blessings and curses are included under the heading דְּבָרִים. Another innovation of Dt is that דְּבָרִים can indicate the whole Law as presented by Deuteronomy.<sup>10</sup> The greatest novelty is the use of the singular דְּבָר to indicate the whole Law.<sup>11</sup> The Deuteronomic usage will become current in later writings, especially in the Psalms.

Yet another characteristic of Dt is that Moses becomes a "prophet", so that the legal "word" is now fused with the prophetic "word".<sup>12</sup> The role of Moses is further enhanced in that, whereas in J and E Moses always announces *God's* "word", in Dt he speaks the "word" he commands, lays before, etc., Israel.<sup>13</sup> The "word" is viewed as the "word" of Moses, insofar as it is possible to make such a distinction in Dt.

We may say that Dt, while reducing the value of the "word" by equating it

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words of the Law, the plur. predominating over the sing. 3:2. Cf. Grether, 79-83, and the texts quoted below.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Grether, 80-81: "Dabar als Bezeichnung der gesetzlichen Forderung Gottes und dabar als Bezeichnung des prophetischen Gotteswortes bilden die beiden Wurzeln, aus sich der dabar-Begriff entfaltet. Die erstgenannte ist älter als die zuletzt erwähnte" (80). In the same sense Robert, *DBS* V, 443. This contradicts the theory of O. Procksch, who holds that "die theologische Entwicklungsgeschichte des Wortbegriffes hat ihre Wurzel in der Prophetie" (*TWNT* IV, art. λέγω, 92, 20f).

<sup>5</sup> J = Ex 34,1.27(bis).28(bis). In Ex 34,28 דְּבָרִים indicates the laws of the Covenant.

<sup>6</sup> Ex 20,1.

<sup>7</sup> Grether, 81.

<sup>8</sup> As a designation for the Sinaitic law: Dt 4,10.13.36; 5,5 (?); 5,19; 9,10 (gloss); 10,2.4. As a designation for other precepts: Dt 12,28; 15,15; 24,18.22; Ex 12,24 (Deuteronomic). Further Dt 28,14 (comp. 28,13 מִצְוֹת); 30,14 (comp. 30,11 מִצְוָה). Cf. Grether, 121.

<sup>9</sup> דְּבַרֵי הַתּוֹרָה: Dt 17,19; 27,3.8.26; 28,58; 29,28; 31,12.24; 32,46. דְּבַרֵי הַבְּרִית: Dt 28,69; 29,8.

<sup>10</sup> Dt 1,1; 31,1; 32,46.

<sup>11</sup> Before Dt, the sing. was used only to designate a single prescription of the Law, the Decalogue always being designated by the plur. Dt uses the sing. to designate the whole Law, with the blessings and curses. Cf. Dt 4,2; 30,14; 32,47.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Grether, 124.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Dt 1,18; 4,2; 6,6; 12,28; 13,1; 30,1; 32,46; etc. This has been pointed out by Grether, 124-125.

with legal prescription, has enhanced its value by making of דבר an "Inbegriff aller Gottesoffenbarung, welche sich fordernd, verheissend und drohend an den Menschen wendet".<sup>14</sup> The broader acceptance of דבר results in the identification of the "word" with the "written word" (the Scriptures), which begins to set in in a definitive manner with Deuteronomy.<sup>15</sup>

The "legal" meaning of דבר does not cease to be with Dt. It can be traced all through the OT, right up to the book of Wisdom. Within the Deuteronomic current, the most outstanding example of the "legal" use of דבר is Ps 119, where דבר (and אִמְרָת) frequently means "the precepts of the Law".<sup>16</sup> In this sense the term דבר is also found in the "Deuteronomic history" (Jos, Sam, K).<sup>17</sup> In the priestly tradition the "word of God" often has a pronounced "legal" sense and דבר even occurs with the meaning of "commandment".<sup>18</sup> Many Psalms bear witness to the equivalence דבר—"legal precept".<sup>19</sup> The prophetic current itself is not exempt from this usage, as can be seen in Jeremiah.<sup>20</sup> After the Exile, as the nomistic tendency begins to assert itself and דבר becomes increasingly synonymous with the "written word" (the Law in particular), the דבר-concept takes on, more and more, the meaning of "Law", in the sense in which it had been used by Dt.<sup>21</sup> דבר יהוה, which was an exclusive designation for the prophetic "word", is now occasionally used to indicate "legal" precepts.<sup>22</sup> The distinction between prophetic revelation and legal prescriptions has ceased to be. Later, in the Wisdom literature, we find that Proverbs employs דבר and אִמְרָה to refer to the words of "wisdom",<sup>23</sup> but such "words" are not to be distinguished from the (moral) precepts of the Torah and the prophets. דבר is less the word of the Sage than that of God and goes back to the revealed precepts of the Law. In Wisdom, the last book of the OT, λόγος is found to refer back to the Sinaitic precepts (Wisd 16,11).

The OT usage was preserved in the Jewish tradition, as can be gathered both from the Rabbinical writings and from the texts of Qumran.

<sup>14</sup> Grether, 126.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Grether, 145; McKenzie, *art. cit.*, *TS* 21 (1960) 183-206, 205.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. vv. 9.16.17.43.57.89.101.105.130.139.160.161. On this point, cf. Robert, *DBS* V, 458.

<sup>17</sup> 2 Sam 12,9; Jos 8,34.35; 2 K 23,3.24; 22,13.16.

<sup>18</sup> On this point, cf. *ibid.*, 451. The substantive דבר = commandment occurs at Num 27,23.

<sup>19</sup> Ps 17,4; 107,11; 50,17; 147,19. For further details, cf. *ibid.*, 458.

<sup>20</sup> "La parole divine dont Jérémie est le destinataire ... a quelquefois le caractère d'un ordre ... Ordinairement, elle signifie la Loi". *Ibid.*, 447. Jeremiah defends the Decalogue and upholds the commandments which defend idolatry and social injustice. He may even be referring to Dt. He seems to have been favourable to the reform of Josias.

<sup>21</sup> Grether, 149.

<sup>22</sup> Num 15,31 (late text); 1 Chron 15,15; 2 Chron 30,12; 34,21; 35,6. Grether, 149.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. esp. those texts where דבר and אִמְרָה are in parallelism with מִצְוָה (2,1; 4,4; 7,1; 13,13). Further Robert, *art. cit.*, 456f.

In the Rabbinical literature, as G. Kittel<sup>24</sup> points out, דבריים is a quasi-technical term for the commandments or precepts of the Law.<sup>25</sup>

In Qumran דבר, frequently found with the meaning "thing", "matter", "word", is also employed to refer to the precepts and commandments of the Law (as determined and lived by the Sect).<sup>26</sup>

Even these very incomplete indications would suffice to show that דבר has a legal colouring in the Jewish tradition and would be sufficient to ask whether the term λόγος in Jn may not have retained some of this colouring when used in the formula τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους). This would be no more than a possibility were it not for other factors present in the Fourth Gospel which speak in favour of such a conclusion. They are :

1) The contrast between Moses (viz., the νόμος given by Moses) and Jesus (viz., the "truth" revealed by Jesus—the "word" or "Word(?)") found at Jn 1,14.17 and 9,29. Whether Jn 1,17 is understood as establishing a direct opposition between the Law and the Word<sup>27</sup> or not (viz., whether v. 17 is taken to refer back to v. 14, thus establishing a direct opposition between the Λόγος and the νόμος, or not) it is clear that what has not come to be through the Law has come to be through Jesus Christ—through the Word or through his "word". At Jn 9,29 the disciples of Moses (9,28) contrast Moses and Jesus. They know God "spoke" to Moses. The "words" Moses heard from God was the Law, the Decalogue in particular.<sup>28</sup> Moses, in the OT and Jewish traditions, is above all the great legislator,<sup>29</sup> who transmitted the "commandments" ("words") he heard from God to Israel. As for Jesus, they do not know where he is from. The implication is that Jesus is the Word-made-flesh, who speaks the "words" (of revelation) he has heard from the Father, words of life, grace and truth.<sup>30</sup>

2) The λόγος — ἐντολή correspondence in Jn. The correspondence results from : a) the use of τηρεῖν which, in the sense of "to keep, observe, fulfill, pay attention to",<sup>31</sup> is found used only with τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους) and τὰς ἐντολάς as object;<sup>32</sup>

<sup>24</sup> "In der Rabbinischen Diskussion ist דיבור, 'der Ausspruch', geradezu ein term techn für die Gesetzgebung und die Gebote". *TWNT* IV, 138f.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. J. Levy, *Wörterbuch über die Talmudim und Midraschim* (Darmstadt, r.p. 1963), I, 374a. M. Jastrow (*A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York, r.p. 1950), *sub voce*) quotes Ex R s 28; Nedarim III, 37<sup>d</sup>, bottom. For the Aramaic דיבורייא (plur.): Targ Jer Ex 20,1; p Meg 4,75<sup>b</sup>, bottom.

<sup>26</sup> 1QS 1,14; 2,13; 3,11; 5,14.19; 8,17.22; 1QH 4,17.35; 12,24; 14,15; 15,14; 17,23; CD 10,3; 16,8. 1QS 8,17 should be translated by "a precept of the Law" and not "a word (point) of the precept", as is usually done. Comp. 1QS 8,22. The same applies to CD 10,3; comp. CD 16,8.

<sup>27</sup> Such is the opinion of Kittel, *TWNT* IV, 138, 10ff.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Dt 5,5; Grether, 85, n. 4.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. H. Cazelles, *DBS* V, art. "Moïse", 1326f; 1332-1335.

<sup>30</sup> See what has been said on this passage above, pp. 108; 186ff; 197ff.

<sup>31</sup> The verb is found used by Jn with the meanings: "to reserve, preserve" (2,10; 12,7); "to keep unharmed, undisturbed" (17,11.12); "to protect" (17,15).

<sup>32</sup> *Τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς*: 14,15.21; 15,10(bis); *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον*: 8,51.52.55; 14,23.

b) the strict parallelism between τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς and τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους) at Jn 14,15,21.23.24; c) Jn 8,55; 12,49f. At Jn 8,55 Jesus says τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ (τοῦ πατρὸς) τηρῶ; at 12,49f: ὁ πατήρ ... μοι ἐντολήν δέδωκεν τί εἴπω καὶ τί λαλήσω.

3) The use of the formula (ים) שמר דבר—τηρεῖν (φυλάσσειν) τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους) in the MT and in the LXX (in Dt in particular). This last factor, to our mind, is of decisive importance.

b) "Keeping the word" in the MT and in the LXX

Preliminary remarks.

1) In the MT נצר (to watch, guard, keep, observe) is never found with דבר (אמרת) as object.<sup>33</sup> It is used with a number of other terms, usually associated with שמר.<sup>34</sup> נצר and שמר are practically synonymous,<sup>35</sup> the former being used relatively rarely.

2) In the LXX τηρεῖν translates שמר more often than it does נצר.<sup>36</sup> so that τηρεῖν may be considered to have שמר as standard equivalent in the MT.<sup>37</sup>

For these reasons, in tracing the possible background of "to keep the word", we can limit our investigation (for the MT) to (דבר) שמר.

3) Although שמר is usually translated by φυλάσσειν and not by τηρεῖν in the LXX, we may still consider שמר דבר (viz., φυλάσσειν τὸν λόγον) to be the equivalent of the Johannine τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον because: (a) Jn probably had access to the MT;<sup>38</sup> (b) the NT in general,<sup>39</sup> with the notable exception of

24(plur.); 15,20(bis); 17,6. The only exception to the rule is τὸ σάββατον τηρεῖν (9,16), in the mouth of the Pharisees to refer to the keeping of a precept!

<sup>33</sup> The LXX Prov 3,1 has τὰ ῥήματα τηρεῖν (τηρεῖν = נצר), but the MT reads מצות יצר. At 1 K (= 1 Sam) 15,11 the verb is not נצר but קום.

<sup>34</sup> So תורה (Prov 28,7; Ps 105,45; 119,34); ברית (Ps 25,10; Dt 33,9); מצות (Prov 6,20; 3,1; Ps 119,115; 78,7); פקודים (Ps 119,69); חק (Ps 119,145); דרך (Prov 23,26).

<sup>35</sup> שמר and נצר have almost the same meaning and are used interchangeably. See, for example, Dt 33,9 and Ps 119, *passim*.

<sup>36</sup> τηρεῖν in the LXX translates שמר 10 ×, נצר 6 ×.

<sup>37</sup> τηρεῖν is found for שמר 10 × out of 22 in which there is a Heb. equivalent. It must be said that the only verbs which are used with any consistency and frequency in the LXX to translate שמר are: φυλάσσειν, τηρεῖν and their composites: διαφυλάσσειν, συντηρεῖν, διατηρεῖν. The Nifal of שמר is often rendered by προσέχειν. Other LXX equivalents are sporadic and exceptional.

<sup>38</sup> The question of Jn's OT "sources" (MT, LXX, other versions) has made the object of numerous studies. It is generally agreed that he had access not only to the LXX, which he quotes, but also to the MT. For a good summary of the problem, cf. Barrett, 22-25.

<sup>39</sup> Φυλάσσειν is found 31 × in the NT, τηρεῖν 70 ×. The preference of the NT for τηρεῖν, as has been noted above, can be gathered from the fact that the standard LXX formula φυλάσσειν τὰς ἐντολάς becomes τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς in the NT. Morgenthaler gives the following figures:

|           | Mt | Mk | Lk | Jn | Act | Pl | Jas | Pt | Jn | Jude | Apoc |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|-----|----|-----|----|----|------|------|
| Τηρεῖν    | 6  | 1  | 0  | 18 | 8   | 7  | 2   | 5  | 7  | 5    | 11   |
| Φυλάσσειν | 1  | 1  | 6  | 3  | 8   | 8  | 0   | 3  | 1  | 1    | 0    |

Lk,<sup>40</sup> prefers τηρεῖν to φυλάσσειν; (c) Jn in particular prefers τηρεῖν to φυλάσσειν, τηρεῖν being a Johannine term;<sup>41</sup> (d) the only two cases in which φυλάσσειν τὸν λόγον (τὰ ῥήματα) is to be found in the NT are Jn 12,47 and Lk 11,28. Both texts reflect the LXX and, indirectly, the MT ((שִׁמְרֵם דְּבַר יְיָ));<sup>42</sup> (e) since both τηρεῖν and φυλάσσειν are used in the LXX for "keeping the word",<sup>43</sup> it is only natural to suppose that Jn may be reflecting the LXX (viz., substituting τηρεῖν, which he prefers and which is already found in the LXX, to φυλάσσειν) and, indirectly, the MT.

aa) *The Masoretic Text* (שִׁמְרֵם דְּבַר יְיָ)

שִׁמְרֵם. In the OT and in the Deuteronomic literature in particular, שִׁמְרֵם is very frequently used in conjunction with terms which designate commands of God, legal precepts. These terms are: מצוה, משפט, עדות, משמרת, פקודים, חקה, מצוה, משפט. Many times שִׁמְרֵם has the Sabbath<sup>45</sup> or other feasts<sup>46</sup> determined by the Law as object. Frequently the object is the Torah<sup>47</sup> or the Covenant<sup>48</sup> themselves.

שִׁמְרֵם דְּבַר יְיָ. The formulas שִׁמְרֵם דְּבַר יְיָ or שִׁמְרֵם דְּבַר יְיָ (אמרת) occur rather frequently. We have found that they are used exclusively 1) in Dt and in the Deuteronomic literature,<sup>49</sup> 2) in a very limited number of texts which are more recent than Dt and have probably been influenced by Deuteronomic usage.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>40</sup> τηρεῖν is not found in the Gospel of St. Luke, φυλάσσειν is used 6 ×. In Act they are used the same number of times (8). Lk, as it is known, imitates and reflects the LXX more closely than the other NT writers.

<sup>41</sup> More than half the occurrences of τηρεῖν are found in the Johannine literature. Jn and the Epistles contain more than 1/3 (25:70) of all the occurrences in the NT.

<sup>42</sup> Like Lk, Jn here reflects the LXX. Whether this is a pure coincidence or not (in Lk it certainly is not), Jn 12,47 shows that φυλάσσειν τὰ ῥήματα and τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους) are very close to each other, if not identical.

<sup>43</sup> See what is said below, pp. 431ff.

<sup>44</sup> We have found that these terms are the object of שִׁמְרֵם in over 200 cases. We refer the reader to Mandelkern's Concordance. מצוה, משפט, עדות, חקה, מצוה, משפט designate different types of law. דרך (δόξος), used in the sense of "to keep the ways of the Lord", has been included because "der Weg des Herrn ist der dem Menschen vom Herrn gebotene Wandel" and is often synonymous with מצוה—ἐντολή. Cf. Michaelis, *TWNT* V, 50-51; 53, 28ff for further details.

<sup>45</sup> Ex 31,14.16; Dt 5,12; Lev 19,30; 26,2; Is 56,2.4.6; etc.

<sup>46</sup> For example: the Passover (Ex 12,17); Mazzoth (Ex 23,15; 34,18); the month of Abib (Dt 16,1).

<sup>47</sup> Cf., for example, Jos 22,5; Jer 16,11; Prov 29,18; 28,4; 1 Chron 22,12; Ps 119, passim.

<sup>48</sup> Cf., for example, Gen 17,9.10; Ex 19,5; Dt 7,9; Ps 103,18; 78,10. We have not calculated those texts where God is said to keep the Covenant.

<sup>49</sup> Ex 12,24 (Deuteronomic); Dt 12,28; 13,1; 17,19; 28,58; 29,8; 31,12; 32,46; 33,9; Ps 119,9.17.57.67.101.158.

<sup>50</sup> 1 Chron 10,13; 2 Chron 34,21; Prov 4,21; 7,1; 22,18. This last text may be pre-exilic. Gen 37,11 is not an exception since שִׁמְרֵם דְּבַר יְיָ here is not used in a technical sense.



The stereotyped formula in Dt is שמר לעשות כול דברי התורה, הברית.<sup>51</sup> The "words" are the words of the Torah, of the Covenant. דבר (or אמרת) may also be used without qualification, either in the singular or in the plural, to indicate the whole Law<sup>52</sup> or a prescription of the Law.<sup>53</sup> They are the words "commanded" by God<sup>54</sup> and "written" in the book of the Law (Dt).<sup>55</sup> In Jos the "word" has become synonymous with "everything which is written in the book of the Torah (of Moses)". This is what must be "observed".<sup>56</sup> In Ps 119 the frequent recurrence of שמר דבר, אמרת, either in the singular or plural, always refers to the (precepts of the) Law.<sup>57</sup> 1 Chron 10,13 has the singular דבר, referring to a specific command of God given to Saul.<sup>58</sup> In 2 Chron 34,21 the typical formula of Dt reappears—the reference is to the "word" written in the book of the Law, which was not "kept".<sup>59</sup> In Prov שמר is used three times<sup>60</sup> with reference to the words of the Sage, of Wisdom: rules of moral conduct which, as we have said, are not to be distinguished from the moral precepts of the Law and the prophets.

The intimate relation "word"—"Law" in the expression שמר דבר (דברים) is manifest. The "word" is commanded, it is the "word" of the Law or Covenant, it is synonymous with the Law itself and must be "kept" just as the "Law" must be "kept".<sup>61</sup>

bb) The LXX. Τηρεῖν (φυλάσσειν) and τηρεῖν (φυλάσσειν) τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους)

In the LXX τηρεῖν τοὺς λόγους is found at 1 K 15,11 (= 1 Sam 15,11)<sup>62</sup> τὰ ῥήματα τηρεῖν is found at Prov 3,1.<sup>63</sup> The expression which is otherwise found

<sup>51</sup> Dt 17,19; 28,58; 31,12; 32,46; 29,8 (הברית).

<sup>52</sup> Dt 12,28 (הדברים); 13,1 (הדבר); 33,9 (אמרתך).

<sup>53</sup> Ex 12,24.

<sup>54</sup> Dt 12,28; 13,1; comp. Jos 1,8f.

<sup>55</sup> Dt 28,58.

<sup>56</sup> Jos 1,8; 23,6.

<sup>57</sup> Ps 119,9.17.57.67.101.158. שמר דבר: vv. 9.17.101 (variant lessons have the plur.); שמר דברים (l.v. has the sing.); שמר אמרת: vv. 67.158 (l.v. for 158 has the plur. מצותך).

<sup>58</sup> Cf. 1 Sam 30,18.

<sup>59</sup> Kittel, on the basis of 2 K 22,13, rejects שמרו in favour of שמעו, but this does not seem justified.

<sup>60</sup> Prov 4,21 (שמר refers to דברי and אמרי of v. 20); 7,1 (אמרי); 22,18 (שמר refers to דברי of v. 17).

<sup>61</sup> The formulas שמר התורה, שמר הדבר (הדברים) are, in some instances, equivalent. See what has been said above and see nn. 15; 16 and 20. Two good illustrations are offered by Dt 33,9 ובריתך ינצרו and 2 Chron 34,21.

<sup>62</sup> Λόγοι refers to the commandment given by God to Saul through Samuel (1 Sam 15,1-3).

<sup>63</sup> The "words" are the commandments of the "sage".

is always φυλάσσειν τοὺς λόγους, τὰ λογία,<sup>64</sup> which corresponds to the Heb. שמר דבר, דבריים,<sup>65</sup> although שמר is occasionally rendered by some other verb.<sup>66</sup>

What has been said above about שמר and (דבריים) שמר דבר holds good for φυλάσσειν and φυλάσσειν τοὺς λόγους. The only difference which can be noted is that the LXX tends to substitute the plural λόγοι, λογία to the singular אמרת, דבר.<sup>67</sup> The singular is retained at Dt 13,1; Ex 12,24; Ps 118(119),67 and 1 Chron 10,13.<sup>68</sup> It is also found in Ps 118(119),57, but דבר is rendered by νόμος, a tendency which may be found elsewhere<sup>69</sup> and which again shows how closely דבר is identified with the Law.

c) שמר—τηρεῖν (φυλάσσειν) and שמר דבר—τηρεῖν (φυλάσσειν) τὸν λόγον in later Jewish tradition

The use of שמר, in the sense of “to observe, obey” in Qumran and in the Rabbinical texts is a good indication that the OT usage was kept alive right up to the NT period and afterwards. The use of שמר with מצוה or ברית as object is altogether current in Qumran<sup>70</sup> and, in the Rabbinical literature, שמר is used for obeying the Law (עשה for obeying the individual precepts of the Law).<sup>71</sup>

That φυλάσσειν (τηρεῖν = שמר), in the “figurative” sense (i.e., in the meaning “to observe, obey”), is intimately bound to the idea of keeping the Law, the precepts, is borne out by the Test XII and by the NT itself. In the Test XII, φυλάσσειν is used regularly with the Law, or the precepts, commandments of God (the Law) as object.<sup>72</sup> In the NT (outside of the Johannine writings) τηρεῖν, used “figuratively”, always has the Law or precepts of the Law as object.<sup>73</sup> The same

<sup>64</sup> Φυλάσσειν τοὺς λόγους: Dt 12,28; 29,8; 32,46; Ps 118(119),9.17.101.158 (λογία); Dt 33,9 (λογία); Prov 4,21 (λόγοι + ῥήσεις); 7,1; 22,18. Jos 1,8; 23,6 = τὰ γεγραμμένα (λογία). Dt 17,19 has φυλάσσειν τὰς ἐντολάς instead of τοὺς λόγους.

<sup>65</sup> See above, nn. 51 to 58.

<sup>66</sup> Dt 28,58: εἰσακούειν τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ νόμου; 31,12: ἀκούειν τοὺς λόγους τοῦ νόμου; 2 Chron 34,21: εἰσακούειν τῶν λόγων.

<sup>67</sup> This phenomenon has already been pointed out above for ἐντολή—מצוה and reflects the “nomistic” tendency. The plur. replaces the sing. at Dt 33,9; Ps 118(119), 17.101.158; 2 Chron 34,21.

<sup>68</sup> Dt 13,1: πᾶν ῥήμα φυλάσσειν; Ex 12,24: τὸ ῥήμα τοῦτο φυλάσσειν; Ps 118(119), 67: τὸ λόγιον φυλάσσειν; 1 Chron 10,13: τὸν λόγον φυλάσσειν.

<sup>69</sup> Comp. Ps 118(119),105; 129(130),5 (S<sup>1</sup>); Jer 8,9 (B); 34(27),18 (S<sup>1</sup>).

<sup>70</sup> שמר in Qumran is found with the objects: ברית (men as subject)—IQS 5,2.9; IQSa 1,3; CD 20,17; מצוה—1QpH 5,5; 1QH 16,13.17; 1QSb 1,1; CD 2,18.21; 3,2.3; 16,7; 19,2; 20,22; דבריים 1Q 29 (frag.) 5,4 (?); משמרת—CD 4,1; יום השבת (precept!) —CD 6,18; 10,14.16.

<sup>71</sup> Tos Sota 8,10; comp. S Dt 48 (84b) on Dt 11,22. Cf. E. H. Riesenfeld, *TWNT* VIII, art. τηρέω, 140-141. That שמר and עשה are found used together (usage which goes back to Dt) shows once again how obedience to the Law is a ποιεῖν, an ἔργον.

<sup>72</sup> Test Jud 26,1; Test Iss 5,1; Test Z 5,1; 10,2; Test D 5,1 (φυλάσσειν and τηρεῖν are used in parallelism); Test A 6,3; Test B 3,1; 10,3.5.

<sup>73</sup> Mt 19,17 (precepts of the Law); Mk 7,9 (the tradition of the Scribes and Pharisees, as opposed to the ἐντολή of God and the precepts of Moses); Mt 23,3 (what the Scribes

phenomenon may be observed for *φυλάσσειν*. The object of the verb (when used in the "figurative" sense) is likewise always the Law, precepts of the Law, or rules of conduct.<sup>74</sup> In the Johannine writings (Jn, 1 Jn, Rev) *τηρεῖν* is always used with either *λόγος* (*λόγοι*) or *ἐντολαί* as object.<sup>75</sup> *Φυλάσσειν* is once used with *λόγος* as object.<sup>76</sup>

The formula *τηρεῖν (φυλάσσειν) τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους)*—(שִׁמְר דְּבַר(ים)) is not found frequently outside of the Johannine literature. In Qumran (שִׁמְר דְּבַר(ים), to refer to the keeping of the commandments (Law), is not to be found, with the possible exception of 1Q 29(frag.) 5,4. However, we do find the "negative" formula *עבר דבר*<sup>77</sup> and *נאץ דבר*.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, given the "legal" meaning *דבר* can have in Qumran (making it almost synonymous with *מצוה*) and the fact that the formula *שִׁמְר מצוה* is altogether current, the argument "ex silentio" is not very impressive. *Φυλάσσειν τοὺς λόγους*, to refer to the precepts (of the Law), is used in the Test XII,<sup>79</sup> which are closely related to Qumran. In the NT *τηρεῖν (φυλάσσειν) τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους)* is found only in the Johannine literature, with the one exception of Lk 11,28.

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and Pharisees say—for they have seated themselves on the seat of Moses!); Act 15,15; 21,25 (l.v.); Jas 2,10 = *νόμος*; Mt 28,20 (everything Jesus has commanded); 1 Cor 7,19 (*τήρησις*): precepts. There is only one case in which we are not dealing with the commandments of the Law or other precepts: 1 Tim 6,14. Here it is the "normative tradition" which must be "kept".

<sup>74</sup> The verb is found with the commandments of Moses (Mt 19,20; Lk 18,21; Mk 10,20), the Law (Act 7,53; 21,24; Gal 6,13) and the precepts of the Law (Rom 2,26) as object. In 1 Tim 5,21 with "rules" of conduct, in Act 16,4 with the decisions of the Elders of Jerusalem concerning those things from which the Gentiles should abstain (cf. 15,19-21.29).

<sup>75</sup> Jn 9,16 is a noteworthy exception. Here *τηρεῖν* is used with the Sabbath, much as in the OT. Otherwise (in the fig. sense of "to observe, follow, keep") it is always found with *λόγος* or *ἐντολαί*: Jn 8,51.52.55; 14,15.21.23.24; 15,10(bis).20(bis); 17,6. The same holds good for 1 Jn where *τηρεῖν* is found with *ἐντολαί* (2,3,4; 3,22.24; 5,3) or with *λόγος* (2,5). In the Apoc *τηρεῖν* is used twice with *ἐντολαί* (12,17; 14,12). *Λόγος* as object appears quite frequently: 3,8.10a; 22,7.9 (the words written in the book; comp. 1,3). In 2,26 there is an implicit reference to the *ἐντολαί*. The formula is a combination of *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολὰς καὶ ποιεῖν ἔργα*. In 3,3 the reference would seem to be to the Christian tradition (that which has been received and heard), but vv. If refer to *ἔργα*.

<sup>76</sup> Lk 11,28: *μακάριοι οἱ ἀκούοντες τὸν λόγον... καὶ φυλάσσοντες* (comp. 8,15); Jn 12,47: *καὶ ἐάν τις μου ἀκούσῃ τῶν ῥημάτων καὶ μὴ φυλάξῃ*.

<sup>77</sup> 1QS 5,14; 8,22; 1QH 12,24; CD 10,3.

<sup>78</sup> 1QS 5,19 (comp. 1QH 4,17).

<sup>79</sup> Test Jud 13,1. The "words" of Judah cannot be distinguished from the "words" of the Law, just as the "commandments" of the Patriarchs cannot be distinguished from the "commandments" of the Law. One has only to compare the following: Test Jud 13,1 and Test N 16,2; Test G 3,1; Test S 7,3 and Test B 10,5. Cf. further Test B 3,1.

B) *The meaning of τηρεῖν (φυλάσσειν) τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους) in Jn*

In the NT, we have seen, the formula τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον is peculiar to the Johannine literature. What does it mean in the Fourth Gospel?

In view of a) the usage of דבר—λόγος with the meaning of “Law”, “precept”, “commandment” (of the Law); b) the usage of שמר and φυλάσσειν (τηρεῖν) in the sense of “to observe, obey” (with “precepts” as object); c) the general, consistent usage of the formula φυλάσσειν τὰς ἐντολάς and of the Deuteronomic use of the formula φυλάσσειν τὸν λόγον to refer to the keeping of the precept(s) of the Law, there can be no doubt that τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους) would recall the “keeping of the Law” to the readers of the Fourth Gospel. In view of the same factors, one would be tempted to say that τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους), φυλάσσειν τὰ ρήματα in Jn is simply equivalent to “keeping the word of command, the precepts” of Jesus, to τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς. Such an assumption seems warranted by: 1) the equivalence דבר—מצוה, λόγος — ἐντολή in the MT and LXX (not to speak of Qumran); 2) the fact that, in Jn, the two formulas are used in close connection;<sup>80</sup> 3) the fact that, in Jn, τηρεῖν itself is used figuratively (in the sense of “to observe”) only with ἐντολαί or λόγος as object.

Are the two formulas equivalent in Jn? Some hold that they are,<sup>81</sup> some that they are not.<sup>82</sup> If we accept the equivalence, λόγος, when used in the formula τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον, would come to assume the meaning “command”, which is not to be found elsewhere in Jn.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Jn 14,21; comp. 14,23.24 (1 Jn 2,3-5,7) where keeping the word(s) and keeping the commandments are both signs of one's love for Jesus and result in being loved by the Father. The equivalence seems to be confirmed also by 12,49f—8,55. 8,55: τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ τηρῶ. 12,50: καθὼς εἶρηκέν μοι ὁ πατήρ, οὕτως λαλῶ would correspond to: μοι ἐντολὴν δέδωκεν τί εἶπω καὶ τί λαλήσω (12,49; comp. 15,10). But see what is said below.

<sup>81</sup> Bultmann, 227, n. 5: “In der Wendung τὸν λόγον τηρεῖν ist λόγος als das gebietende Wort, das Gebot verstanden, wie die damit wechselnde Wendung ... beweist”. Cf. further id., *TWNT* VI, 230; Lagrange, 389; 391; 345; Loisy, 579-80; Bernard, 318; 545 (ad 14,15).

<sup>82</sup> Westcott (138, ad 8,51) draws a distinction: “‘Keeping the word’ of Christ is also to be distinguished from ‘keeping his commandments’ (1 Jn 2,3.5); the former marks the observance of the whole of revelation in its organic completeness, and the latter the observance of definite precepts”. Barrett (ad 14,23.24) also holds they are not identical.

<sup>83</sup> Vs. Bultmann (cf. n. 81 above) and Bernard (251), who writes: “The λόγος of

In order to understand the possible meaning of *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* (= ἐν τῷ λόγῳ μένειν) in Jn, it is necessary to recall briefly the nature of "word" and "faith" in the Fourth Gospel. Revelation takes place through the "word" Jesus speaks (is). The "word" Jesus speaks reveals nothing besides the mystery of his person.<sup>84</sup> Such being the nature of the "word", it can only be grasped in faith. Now, if Jn views faith not only as an initial "act", whereby the "word" is accepted, but also as a gradual process of "appropriation" and "penetration" of the "word" received, *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* could well correspond to this "growth" in faith.

In Jn there is a faith which only has the appearance of faith and which is not genuine (v.g., "faith" in Jesus as a wonder-worker based exclusively on an misunderstanding of "signs").<sup>85</sup> There is also a faith which may be called "initial". It is faith, but a faith which is unstable and has not reached its plenitude.<sup>86</sup> There is finally a faith

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God is used sometimes by Jn to signify the message or revelation or *command* (I underline) which God has given". Bernard gives no proof of this. The verb λέγειν can be followed by a command (cf. Jn 2,5; 5,8.11; 6,12; etc.). Jn 12,50 apparently equates ἐντολὴν δέδωκεν with καθὼς εἶρηκεν. Ἐντολή, however, as we shall try to show, embraces the whole mission of Jesus and is to be distinguished from the ἐντολαί of the Father. Furthermore, καθὼς εἶρηκέν μοι ... οὕτως λαλῶ emphasizes the correspondence between the "word" spoken to Jesus by the Father (see what has been said above, pp. 197ff) and the word Jesus speaks, more than the fact that, in speaking, Jesus carries out the command of the Father. In other terms: εἶρηκεν has primarily the meaning "words spoken by the Father", which are faithfully transmitted by Jesus, and only secondarily that of "word of command". The two are very closely related, they are not identical. The close connection is due to the element of obedience which is present in the fidelity with which Jesus transmits the word received. Yet, that Jesus speaks what he has heard, what he has been told, stresses the perfect correspondence between his word and that of the Father, rather than the idea of an execution of an order received from the Father. It is basically the same thought contained in Jn 8,28: καθὼς ἐδίδαξέν με ὁ πατήρ ταῦτα λαλῶ.

<sup>84</sup> On this see the excellent chapter of Bultmann's *Theologie*: "Die Offenbarung als das Wort" (412-422). There are only two reservations which must be made: 1) B. tends to reduce everything to the "word" and neglect the "act" (which are not purely and simply "verba visibilia"); 2) for B. the content of the "word" is merely the "dass" of revelation; he thus overlooks the fact that the "dass" itself is based on a "weil". It is because Jesus is the Son of God that he is the Revealer. B. reduces this to "mythological formulation". Mythological formulation or not, it is still an essential part of Johannine theology.

<sup>85</sup> Jn 2,23-25 (cf. Hoskyns, ad loc.); 3,2-3 (cf. Barrett, ad loc.); 4,45-48 (cf. Lagrange, ad loc.); 7,3-7 (cf. Lightfoot, ad loc.).

<sup>86</sup> Bultmann (*Theologie*, 425) distinguishes between "echter" and "unechter" Glaube.

which is firmly possessed and which gives the "knowledge" which is eternal life (Jn 17,3). To stress this distinction Jn speaks of discipleship or divine filiation as a dynamic reality. Many exegetes hold that he also uses πιστεύειν with two distinct constructions (with εἰς and the accusative and with the dative) as a means of distinguishing "full" from "initial" faith.<sup>87</sup>

We need not trace all the texts in which faith is presented as something which must be developed and deepened, discipleship and divine filiation as realities to be realized. Good illustrations may be found in such texts as Jn 1,12f;<sup>88</sup> 3,5;<sup>89</sup> 12,36<sup>90</sup> and 16,12-15.<sup>91</sup> Only those texts in which τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους) and the equivalent expression ἐν τῷ λόγῳ μένειν (viz., ὁ λόγος μένει ἐν) appear need retain our attention. They furnish ample proof that faith is a dynamic reality in Jn and that it is the dynamic nature of faith which explains the meaning the formula τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον takes on in Jn.

The texts in question are : 1) for λόγος — μένειν : 5,37f; 8,31.(37); 15,7-8; 2) for λόγος — τηρεῖν : 8,51f.55; 12,47; 14,23f; 15,20; 17,6.

a) *Jn 5,37f*

The text has been analyzed in detail. V. 38 was shown to be a

It would be better to speak of "initial" and "full" faith. Initial faith is genuine faith, but it is imperfect.

<sup>87</sup> This distinction was pointed out by Westcott and Abbott. It has since been adopted by a number of exegetes. Among the more recent : Lightfoot, Bernard, Dupont, Dodd, de la Potterie, Barrett, Brown.

<sup>88</sup> Unless v. 13 is taken as an elucidation which answers the question : Quomodo nascuntur ? (so Augustine, Weiss, Lagrange), the text affirms that one must become what one is. Those who are born of God have the power to become children of God. So Chrysostom, Scotus Erigena, Theophylact, Euthymius, Thomas, Maldonatus, Westcott, Schanz, Calmes.

<sup>89</sup> In order to enter the Kingdom one must be born again of water and Spirit. There is an exegetical tradition, going back to Hermas, which interprets : those who are reborn through a gradual growth in faith, through a life according to the Spirit who leads into the fulness of truth. For a good summary of the history of exegesis relative to this passage cf. I. de la Potterie, " 'Naître de l'eau et naître de l'Esprit'. Le texte baptismal de Jn 3,5", in : *La vie selon l'Esprit*, 31-63, 34-38 and 59-60.

<sup>90</sup> Westcott (ad loc.) is probably right in underlining the idea of progress and in stating : "This glorious transformation is the *last issue* of faith" (I underline).

<sup>91</sup> Cf. de la Potterie, *Alētheia*, 181-208. For a different view, cf. Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 145ff. Both authors agree that the activity of the Spirit is to bring the disciples to a deeper understanding of the revelatory work of Jesus.

denial of the claim that the Jews, as a nation, were the custodians of the divine "word", which they possessed in the twofold Torah. V. 38 marked a progression over v. 37 and "having the word abide in one" was considered something more than "hearing the word" in the first place. It was pointed out that the claims Christians made for themselves against the Jews have left their mark on vv. 37-38 and were probably at the origin of the expression: "You do not have his word abiding in you". The relationship of the Jews to OT revelation is being described in terms of the relationship of Christians to NT revelation. One hears the word and then one must "keep it".

b) *Jn 8,31*

The Jews who have believed on Jesus (οἱ πεπιστευκότες αὐτῷ Ἰουδαῖοι) are told that if they remain in the word of Jesus they will be (become) true disciples. The Jews are, apparently, those who in v. 30 are said to have believed on Jesus. It will therefore be necessary to determine the relationship of v. 31 to v. 30 and to ask who are these Jews who are asked to remain in the word.

Brown<sup>92</sup> holds that the genesis of 8,31 is as follows: v. 30 was inserted to break up the discourse. It therefore became necessary to insert a new introduction to the following words of Jesus. Seeing the reference in v. 30 to some Jews who had believed on Jesus, the author (the final redactor?) made the believing Jews the audience of what follows. We propose another solution. Jn 8,30 is obviously an editorial insertion used to close off the section 8,21-29. Πολλοὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτόν is a stereotyped formula which runs all through the public ministry as an editorial *Leitmotiv*.<sup>93</sup> The affirmation comes as somewhat of a surprise since the tone of the whole chapter is one of strife and opposition, misunderstanding and refusal of Jesus (8,22.25.27.33.37.39, etc.).<sup>94</sup> Jn 8,31a, on the other hand, obviously opens a new section and is "editorial" in character. Since Jn 8 is composite by nature, we believe that the evangelist or redactor inserted both 8,30 and 8,31a in order to link 8,29 to 8,31b. Vv. 8,31ff represent a unit which speaks of a "new" freedom physical descent from Abraham cannot give and which is promised to those who remain in the word of Christ. Since "remaining in the word" presupposes an initial act of faith, it was necessary for the evangelist to mention that some "Jews" had believed in order to have 8,31bff follow logically upon the section which ends with 8,29. This was accomplished by mentioning 1) that some believed on Jesus (v. 30) and 2) that the words which follow were addressed to those who believed

<sup>92</sup> Comm., 354.

<sup>93</sup> Jn 2,23; 4,39; 7,31; 10,42; 12,11.42.

<sup>94</sup> Barrett (ad 8,31) rightly finds v. 30 "anachronistic". Brown (351) finds v. 30 "rather startling" and also treats it as an editorial insertion.

Jesus (v. 31a). The change in construction from πιστεύειν εἰς to πιστεύειν with the dative was used as a device to underline the imperfect faith of those to whom Jesus addresses his invitation to remain in his word and thus come to know the truth. If this distinction is held,<sup>95</sup> we are not dealing with the same believers at 8,30 and 8,31ff.

The attitude of the Jews described in vv. 37ff hardly seems to be that of "believers", even if it is only a matter of initial faith. Nor is the dilemma solved by attributing v. 31 to a "redactor" (as we have done)—what is obvious to us should have been obvious to the redactor, unless we admit that v. 31a is a gross oversight.

Dodd<sup>96</sup> has proposed to see in these Jews Jewish-Christians who wished to uphold the traditional privileges of the Jews. The author of the Gospel would be attacking them in order to defend the supra-national character of the Church and the equality of Gentile Christians. One of the major problems raised by such an interpretation is that the Jews in Jn 8,37ff are described in much the same way as the Jews in Jn 8,21-29 and in the rest of the Gospel generally. Ἰουδαῖοι seems to indicate the avowed enemies of Jesus and of the "truth".<sup>97</sup> Would Christians have been addressed in such terms? The problem has been considered by Dodd.<sup>98</sup> His reply is that the language of Jn is not any harsher than that used by Paul against the "Judaizers" in Gal. The Jews who claim to be better Christians than the Gentiles because of their descent become, in Jn 8,31-47, the type of unbelief, for the evangelist "has lifted the whole argument (especially ... 42-7 ...) to a level where its local and temporary aspects recede, and the issues are universal and radical ..."

In our opinion the basic line of thought is correct : we are confronted

<sup>95</sup> With Lightfoot, Bernard, Brown, Westcott, Barrett, Lagrange, Bultmann (189, n. 1) and Strathmann do not see any distinction. Lagrange is forced to introduce (following Augustine) a new audience at 8,33. Dodd (*art. cit.*, *RHPR* 37 (1957) 5-17, 7) holds that we are simply dealing with a stylistic variation. But see *Interpretation*, 183, n. 3.

<sup>96</sup> *Art. cit.*

<sup>97</sup> See above, pp. 293ff; 307ff; 395ff.

<sup>98</sup> *Art. cit.* (English version, in: *More New Testament Studies* (Manchester, 1968), 41-57), 45f. Dodd admits that the harshness of the language used by Jn against the Jews creates a difficulty which cannot be completely overcome—if the Jews are considered Christians. Our interpretation solves this difficulty. The Jews who have believed and have not remained in the "word" are Jews who have reverted to Judaism—they are no better than the Jews who have not believed in the first place.



with Jews who had believed, with Christians. But the Jews who had believed are not, as far as we can see, Jews who take a Jewish-national standpoint against Gentile Christians. They are Jews who have made an initial act of faith and have fallen away. We have seen that such a situation is mirrored in other passages of the Fourth Gospel.<sup>99</sup> There are Jews who believed and did not "confess" Christ openly for fear of the Jews; there are others who presumably were forced by the measures taken against them to choose between Jesus (and his disciples) or the Synagogue and who reverted to the Synagogue; there are, finally, those who "confessed" Christ and were cast out of Synagogue. This last group are those who "remained in the word", the second group are those who made an initial act of faith but fell away (did not remain in the word and were not true disciples), the first group are those Jn is presumably exhorting not to fall away (viz., to abide in the word). The Jews who believed with an imperfect faith, only to revert to Judaism when persecution came their way, are those who are treated by Jn with the same severity as those who did not believe in the first place; it is they who become the type of unbelief. Dodd justly remarks that 8,31-47 "as a record of an historical incident ... fails to convince".<sup>100</sup> He believes that the step which has been left out (the *Sitz im Leben*) in the life of the Church cannot be the controversy Church—Synagogue because "it is not clear why the Synagogue should be represented by 'believing' Jews".<sup>101</sup> We hope we have clarified this point.

Coming back to our formula: "to remain in the word", we can affirm that a contrast is being drawn between initial faith and the fulness of knowledge.<sup>102</sup> If those who have made an initial act of faith remain in the "word", they will "know" the "truth",<sup>103</sup> they

<sup>99</sup> See above, pp. 245ff.

<sup>100</sup> *Art. cit.*, 42.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>102</sup> Bultmann (*Theologie*, 425-426) considers knowledge a "Strukturmoment des Glaubens", but admits that *πιστεύειν*, as "erste Zuwendung zu Jesus", is distinct from *γινώσκειν*, which demands full faith. Knowledge, which in Jn often takes on the sense of "to comprehend, understand" (3,10; 12,16; 8,43), thus presupposes a certain perfection of faith. Cf. de la Potterie, *Alētheia*, 223-224.

<sup>103</sup> "Word" and "truth" are related particularly frequently in Jn 8,31-55, and 8,31 introduces precisely this section. Elsewhere Jn will have Jesus say: "Your word is truth". On the other hand, "word" and "truth" are bound to the person of Jesus, with a tendency to become identified with him.

will penetrate the mystery of Christ's person <sup>104</sup> and he (the "truth") will set them free.<sup>105</sup> "To remain in the word" indicates the process of interiorization of the "word" accepted in the initial act of faith. Knowing the truth is an anticipated eschatological reality which results <sup>106</sup> from this interiorization and is the mark of (constitutes) the true disciple.

c) *Jn 8,37*

This text is of no particular assistance in determining the sense of "remaining in, keeping the word", *χωρεῖν* being, by nature, ambiguous. It can mean: "to find no place in" or "to make no progress, head-way".<sup>107</sup> If this last meaning is adopted, those who seek to kill Jesus (8,37) are those who made an initial act of faith but did not remain in the word.<sup>108</sup>

d) *Jn 15,7-8*

This is a very important text and contains the same idea found in *Jn 8,31-32*. The major difference is that here the words are addressed not to the Jews, but to the Twelve themselves!

The context need retain our attention only insofar as it is necessary to understand vv. 7f. The metaphor of the vine and the branches is used to illustrate the relationship which must prevail between Jesus and his disciples. If the branches are to bear fruit, they must remain united to the vine. There are branches which, although united to the

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<sup>104</sup> On the background of the formula *γινώσκειν τὴν ἀλήθειαν*, see the thorough analyses of de la Potterie, *Alētheia*, 213-220. *Jn* has made use of a formula which was apocalyptic and kerygmatic. The apocalyptic element has been retained by *Jn* but "transposed" to a christological level; the kerygmatic element has been transformed to mean: "to penetrate the depth of the Christian message", rather than "to embrace the faith".

<sup>105</sup> The "word" refers to 8,12-19, which is a revelation discourse. *Γινώσθε τὴν ἀλήθειαν* (8,32) corresponds to *γινώσθε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι* (8,28). That the "truth" refers to the person of Christ is further brought out by the parallelism between v. 32 and v. 36: "the 'truth' will set you free ... if the Son set you free ..."

<sup>106</sup> The *καί* in 8,32 is consecutive.

<sup>107</sup> Cf. *BAG*, 898 (lit.); Lagrange, ad loc.; Bultmann, ad loc., n. 5.

<sup>108</sup> This could constitute a further argument in favour of Dodd's thesis, but we should recall that the figure of Judas (whom we can hardly identify with the "Jewish-Christians") has a role to play in *Jn* as an example of one who did not remain in the faith. Cf. Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 175-176.

vine, do not bear fruit and are cut off (v. 2a). Vv. 3 and 7f correspond to each other. V. 3 is taken up and set forth in vv. 7f. Vv. 4-6 can actually be considered a parenthesis and can be omitted without impairing the main line of thought.

The apostles are καθαροὶ διὰ τὸν λόγον (15,3). A first cleansing has already taken place through the "word".<sup>109</sup> Λόγος embraces the whole revelation of Jesus.<sup>110</sup> It is because<sup>111</sup> of this "word" that they are clean. The "word" cleanses only him who accepts it, for others it is condemnation. The perfect λελάληκα thus stresses the abiding effect the word of Jesus has in believers. What is only implicit in 15,3 is now made explicit. This "cleansing" must go on. They must remain in Jesus, his "words" (τὰ ῥήματα) must remain in them (v. 7).<sup>112</sup> This is necessary if they are to bear much fruit (καρπὸν πολύν; comp. v. 2b). If the "words" remain in the apostles (Christians), they effect the further cleansing which results in bearing much fruit and becoming disciples (vv. 7f). The perfect λελάληκα (v. 3) had already stressed the abiding effect of Jesus' "word". Now Jn adds that the word(s) must remain in believers if they are to become disciples.<sup>113</sup>

Like "knowledge of the truth" in Jn 8,32, discipleship is an eschatological reality which comes about through an ever deepening penetration of the word. "Disciple" is no longer to be taken in the ordinary sense of "believer".<sup>114</sup> The Twelve were already "disciples" in this sense. Μαθηταί has taken on a new shade of meaning:<sup>115</sup> that

<sup>109</sup> This double "cleansing" has been very well described by Hoskyns, ad loc. Cf. also Westcott, ad loc.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. Westcott, ad loc.; Bultmann, 410.

<sup>111</sup> Bultmann (410, n. 5) states that the meaning is very close to the instrumental sense. Westcott points out that the "word" is here considered as the "spring and source, and not only the instrument, of their purity". The instrumental sense, which is not present (διὰ is used with the acc., not the gen.), would weaken the dynamic nature of the word, considered as an active power in the present context.

<sup>112</sup> Even Lagrange, who considers τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον and τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς equivalent, is forced to admit, against Cyril: "On ne saurait dire ... que le sens soit ici garder les commandements, puisque le texte dit les paroles ..." Barrett (ad loc.) refers to the "specific sayings and precepts of Jesus" (I underline).

<sup>113</sup> The lessons γένησθε and γενήσεσθε are both very well attested. If the future is not accepted, the sense hardly changes since γένησθε would then depend on ἵνα.

<sup>114</sup> Μαθητής in Jn, as in Act, extends its meaning to "believers", "Christians" (cf. Rengstorff, *TWNT* IV, 462f).

<sup>115</sup> The turn is had in 6,66. Jesus uses the word for the first time in Jn 8,32 and stresses the nature of true discipleship.

of a "true" disciple (ἀληθῶς μαθηταί μου ἔστε 8,31; γένησθε ἐμοὶ μαθηταί 15,8). It is such "disciples" whose prayer will be heard (15,7) and will bear much fruit (15,8). Thüsing has shown <sup>116</sup> that καρπὸν φέρειν means to win over men to Jesus. This interpretation fits in perfectly with the idea of faithfulness to the word as the condition of true discipleship. The disciples continue the work of Christ by faithfully proclaiming <sup>117</sup> the word received (cf. 15,20; 17,14-20). It is therefore necessary that the "word" of the Master abide in them, i.e., that they grasp the "truth" by becoming firmly rooted in the "word", if they are to bear fruit (win men over to the Word, through the "word").

We now come to the expression: τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον.

e) Jn 8,51-52

Lagrange <sup>118</sup> has rightly pointed out that the context is not very clear. The words introduce a new turn of thought and are an actual return to 8,31.<sup>119</sup> The connection with the preceding verses is loose <sup>120</sup> and the passage in v. 53 abrupt. Jesus had said that *those who keep his word* would not see death. The Jews reply: "Are *you* greater than Abraham, who died?" The implication is that *Jesus* will not see death. One has the impression that the "logion" here introduced put a considerable strain on the literary ingenuity of the evangelist.

What is stated is even more perplexing, given the context. If 8,31 was understandable because addressed to the Jews who had made an initial act of faith, it seems strange that Jesus should speak of

<sup>116</sup> *Erhöhung*, 53ff; 107ff.

<sup>117</sup> This "proclamation" is not simply a matter of faithfully transmitting a "teaching" received in the Rabbinical sense (i.e., "material", word-for-word transmission). It involved a personal relationship to Christ (cf. Rengstorf, *TWNT* IV, 457ff). "Keeping the word", however, shows that the relationship to Jesus is had in and through the word, so that "remaining in the word" and "remaining in Jesus" are equivalent. This life of faith must also reflect itself, as we shall see, in the keeping of the "commandments" and the "commandment" of brotherly love. Indeed the life of faith demands that the disciple follow Christ even to death (cf. 15,18ff; 12,25f; 13,1-17; 21,19). Cf. Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 126-141.

<sup>118</sup> "Le contexte n'est pas très clair". Comm., ad loc.

<sup>119</sup> So Westcott, ad loc.; Hoskyns, ad loc.; Lightfoot, 194; Lagrange, ad loc.

<sup>120</sup> One can either relate the thought to the κρίνειν of v. 50 (cf. 5,24) with Lightfoot, Lagrange, Hoskyns, Bultmann, Brown, or to the idea of Jesus' δοξασθῆναι (v. 50) with Loisy (579).

"keeping the word" to the Jews who "dishonour" him (v. 49)—unless "keeping the word" is given the same meaning as "to believe" in the sense of "to make an initial act of faith". But Jn obviously does not hold that "initial faith" gives eternal life (cf. further down). Once again the reference seems to be to believers<sup>121</sup> rather than to the representatives of the "world". Bultmann takes 8,51 as a contrast: to the Jews who remain in death Jn opposes those who "keep his word" and have life.<sup>122</sup> He is probably right. Jn would thus have Christians in mind and has indicated this by not having Jesus address the Jews directly, as at 8,31, but by having him use *the conditional* and *the third person*: ἐάν τις ... The thought seems to be the same as in Jn 8,31-32. He who remains in the word was there promised knowledge of the truth and freedom (from sin). Sin and death are inseparably connected (cf. 8,21.24). Jesus now promises eternal life to those who "keep" his word. We will see that in chapter 17 the two ideas: knowledge of "truth" and "eternal life" will be brought together.

It thus becomes apparent that "to keep the word" wishes to express abiding, true faith. Jn 5,24 has Jesus promise eternal life to him who "hears" the word. Jn 8,51 apparently wishes to explain what a true "hearing" of the word implies; "to keep the word" expresses more than "to hear the word".<sup>123</sup>

#### f) Jn 8,55

Here "keeping" the word cannot have the meaning "to believe", whereas "to keep the command" would suit the context. In view of the parallelism with 8,51, both verses would be using λόγος in this sense (unless there has been a change in meaning). Yet the meaning "command" is not the meaning intended by Jn. The thought is rather: Jesus "knows" the Father and is faithful to the "word" the Father has entrusted to him to reveal.<sup>124</sup> For the disciples, "keeping the word" means faithfulness to the word received in faith; for Jesus it is faithfulness to the word he has "heard" from the Father as the only Son. The knowledge the disciples acquire means possession of the truth (the word) to which they are called to testify and this

<sup>121</sup> Lightfoot (194) holds that Jesus is addressing the same hearers as in 8,31f.

<sup>122</sup> Comm., 246.

<sup>123</sup> This is conceded by Brown, 366.

<sup>124</sup> See what has been said above, pp. 412ff.

knowledge is the outcome of faith, the result of what they *become*. Jesus, on the contrary, has this knowledge and "keeps the word" because of the unity with the Father which he has in virtue of what he *is*.

At 8,55 Jesus' "keeping the word" is connected with the *knowledge* he has of the Father. At 8,52 the false ἐγνώκαμεν of the Jews "ist das Gegenstück zu dem ἐγνώκαμεν der glaubenden Gemeinde" who "keep the word".<sup>125</sup> Jesus "keeps the word" because he knows the Father, the faithful come to know Jesus and the Father because they "keep the word".

g) *Jn 12,47f*

The verses in question make a distinction between ἀκούειν and φυλάσσειν (τὰ ῥήματα). According to v. 47, one can "hear the word" and (then) not "keep the word". The problem which arises is the sense to be given to ἀκούειν. It has been interpreted in the sense of "to hear the word outside of the context of faith" ("physical" audition).<sup>126</sup> In this case, "to keep the word" and "to receive the word" (v. 48)<sup>127</sup> would both mean "to believe". In our opinion and in the opinion of many others,<sup>128</sup> ἀκούειν means "to believe" and is equivalent to λαμβάνειν τὰ ῥήματα. What then is the meaning of τὰ ῥήματα φυλάσσειν? Brown speaks of "doing" and refers to Mt 7,26,<sup>129</sup> Barrett speaks of "obeying",<sup>130</sup> Hoskyns of "guarding ... as a rule of life".<sup>131</sup> The sense would be very close to that of φυλάσσειν τὰς ἐντολάς. Lagrange has pointed out<sup>132</sup> that Jn does not insist, as the Synoptists do, on a teaching to be put into practice by those who

<sup>125</sup> Bultmann, ad loc., 246.

<sup>126</sup> Bultmann, (*Theologie*, 423; Comm., 195) takes ἀκούειν καὶ φυλάσσειν as a unit: true hearing. 'Ακούειν would therefore mean mere physical hearing (*Vernehmen*).

<sup>127</sup> Λαμβάνειν τὰ ῥήματα is a semiticism, as Bultmann (104, n. 3) points out. Schlatter (ad Mt 13,20) quotes two passages from S Dt 76, in which קבל is used with תורה and מצוה as object. We were unable to find other parallels in the OT, Test XII or Qumran (but cf. 1QSa 1,11).

<sup>128</sup> Brown, 491; Hoskyns; Bernard; Barrett; etc.

<sup>129</sup> "The Johannine 'keep' is not really different from the Matthean 'do' since both verbs mean observance ..." Brown, 491.

<sup>130</sup> Barrett, ad loc.

<sup>131</sup> Hoskyns, ad loc.: "guard the words ... as an active rule of life".

<sup>132</sup> Comm., ad loc. For Jn true faith is a principle of action, he therefore cannot be inviting believers, according to Lagrange, to put their faith into practice.

adhere to it *more or less*. We agree. Mt 7,26 is hardly a parallel to Jn 12,47! The conclusion to be drawn, however, is not that which Lagrange drew (viz., those who "heard" are not believers). Jn is rather inviting those who have believed (with an initial act of faith) to keep the word, i.e., to attain to full faith by abiding in the word. That this fulness of faith results in putting specific precepts into practice is brought out by *another* formula: τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς.

Jn 12,47-48 is speaking of two classes: those who have "heard" the word (believed) and not "kept" it (have fallen away in some fashion or other) and those who have refused to "hear". Both will be "judged" by the "word".

#### b) Jn 14,23-24

The commentaries see no distinction between 14,15.21 and 14,23-24. Bernard writes that τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς (14,15) is used "interchangeably with τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον (... 14,23-24)" and that in 14,23-24 Jesus repeats his former teaching.<sup>133</sup> Bernard's words are typical and may be found in much the same form in other commentaries.<sup>134</sup>

The context is unfortunately not of much help. It should be noted, however, that in the "Paraclete-saying" contained in v. 26 the theme of faith is more prominent than in that of 14,16-17 and that it is introduced by ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν, a formula dear to Jn and which points to Christ as the Revealer. The ταῦτα hardly refers to what he has just said, but to all his message. It is this "word" the Spirit will teach and "recall". Vv. 25-26 are thematically connected with 23-24, where Jesus also speaks about his "word" and his "words". Apart from this, the context can cast no further light on our verses.

<sup>133</sup> Comm., ad loc. Yet Bernard admits that λόγος at 14,23 means "the message of Jesus as a whole" rather than the specific commandments of Jesus (ἐντολαί). Cf. 545; 549; 550.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. Lagrange, ad 14,24. Bultmann (ad 14,15; 474-475), who speaks of "Gehorsam" which is "der Glaube", distinguishes between the ἐντολή and faith, but not between the ἐντολαί and faith (475, n. 4). Barrett holds that λόγος means the "whole saving message" (ad 14,23) and that λόγοι probably has the same sense (cf. ad 14,24), but then refers to 14,15.21 (cf. ad 14,23) and claims (ad 17,6) that λόγοι "is nearer in meaning to ἐντολαί". Lightfoot speaks of "knowledge and obedience of commandments" (270) and of "love and faithfulness to the Lord's word" (271), but then equates 14,15.21.23f (cf. ad 14,24, 277) and sums them up as "obedience to the ... commandments". Loisy (755) writes: "Quiconque n'aime pas Jésus ne garde pas ses préceptes, et par là même se rend désobéissant à Dieu, car la parole de Jésus est celle du Père" (I underline).

It is clear that vv. 21 and 24 are parallel, but do they have the same meaning? We believe they do not. *Τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* (τοὺς λόγους) and *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς* are here used in close relationship, but one should recall that *μένειν ἐν τῷ λόγῳ*, *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον*, *φυλάσσειν τὰ ρήματα* are used when there still has been no allusion to a "commandment" or "commandments" of Christ (see what is said below).

i) *Jn 15,20*

Jesus predicts that the disciples will share his destiny. The context refers to "hatred" (v. 18), to the "world" which hates the disciples (v. 19). V. 20 opposes two groups: one is constituted by the representatives of the world who will hate and persecute the disciples as they have persecuted Jesus,<sup>135</sup> the other by those who have "kept" the word.<sup>136</sup> The antithesis seems to imply that this second group is not constituted by "believers" in the wider acceptance of the term but that Jn wanted to indicate something more. Those who keep the word are those "courageous followers ... faithful hearers"<sup>137</sup> who not only heard the word but kept it. The "true disciples", the "type" of believers, are opposed to the "world" and those who belong to it, the "type" of unbelief.

j) *Jn 17,6*

The theme which is of interest to us and which plays a major role in chapter 17 is that of the glorification of Jesus in his disciples and, in particular, the place the "word" has in this process.

Jesus is here praying that the "work" begun in the first stage (before his glorification) be set forth. The work of the glorified Christ (which belongs to the second stage—the time of the Church) is projected back into the period of his earthly ministry, so that the first stage and the second stage are telescoped into each other.<sup>138</sup>

<sup>135</sup> Those who persecute Jesus (at 15,16) are the "Jews"; hatred is the mark of the "world" and of those who belong to it (3,20; 7,7), as is clearly stated at 15,19.

<sup>136</sup> The opposition of two groups is accepted by Hoskyns, Westcott, Bultmann (423); Barrett; Lightfoot (292). vs Lagrange, Loisy. The implication is that the disciples will meet with the same lack of faith which confronted Jesus. This, however, is only implied in the words, "If they kept my word they will keep yours also" (cf. Bultmann, 423).

<sup>137</sup> Westcott, ad 15,20.

<sup>138</sup> *Erhöhung*, 177ff.



This is especially important for the problem with which we are concerned. The faith of the disciples is described as true knowledge (17,8) and we have seen that knowledge presupposes a certain perfection of faith.<sup>139</sup> Thüsing is no doubt right in saying that "faith" here cannot refer only to the faith of the Eleven during Jesus' lifetime or shortly before his death.<sup>140</sup> The imperfect faith of the disciples is already viewed in the light of the pouring out of the Spirit at the moment of Jesus' death-glorification.

In support of this view we can add the following observations to those of Thüsing: The future dimension is not absent in chapter 17<sup>141</sup> yet the use of the future, so frequent in chapters 13-16, is almost absent.<sup>142</sup> Also absent are the conditional sentences and the imperatives.<sup>143</sup> In chapters 13-16 the "future" dimension is ever-present. Discipleship, faith and knowledge, viewed mainly as something to come in the previous chapters, are considered in a different light in chapter 17. This is particularly evident in the case of faith. In chapters 13-14 Jesus could still say, "Believe" (cf. 14,1(bis)) to the disciples or speak "in order that" they believe (13,19; 14,29). If 16,27.30 give the impression of faith firmly possessed, this is corrected in 16,31. The situation in chapter 17 is reversed. In Jn 14, Jesus said, *ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ γνώσεσθε ... ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ* (v. 20) and spoke of "keeping the word" in the conditional: *ἐάν τις ἀγαπᾷ με τὸν λόγον μου τηρήσει* (v. 23); at 17,6b-8 he says, *τὸν λόγον σου τετήρηκαν. νῦν ἔγνωσαν ... ὅτι τὰ ῥήματα ... δέδωκα αὐτοῖς ... καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔλαβον καὶ ἔγνωσαν ὅτι παρὰ σοῦ ἐξῆλθον καὶ ἐπίστευσαν ...*

The change of tenses in vv. 6-8 is important. *Τετήρηκαν* means: "as they had 'heard' this at first" (cf. *ἔλαβον*) "so they continued to hear it"; *ἔγνωσαν* means: "they have come to know, they know" (the Eng. pres. best renders the actual result of past experience) "what they 'realized'" (*ἔγνωσαν*).<sup>144</sup> Bultmann puts it in the most concise and clear form possible: vv. 6-7 (perfects) describe "das Wesen der Glaubenden", v. 8 (aorists) "wie es dazu gekommen ist".<sup>145</sup> The perfect *τετήρηκαν* should be further compared with the aorists (*τηρήσῃ*, *ἐτήρησαν*) of Jn

<sup>139</sup> See above, pp. 149-151.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 177-178.

<sup>141</sup> See the *ἵνα*-clauses in vv. 11.13.15.19.21.22.23.24.26.

<sup>142</sup> The fut. is used 70 × (71 × if the fut. is read at 15,8) in chs. 13-16. In the whole Gospel the fut. is used only 171 ×. Chs. 13-16 thus contain 41.5 % of all the futures which occur in the 21 chapters of Jn. In ch. 17 the fut. is found only at 17,6.26.

<sup>143</sup> Conditional clauses are notably absent in ch. 17, contrary to what is the case in chs. 13-15. Cf. 13,17.35; 14,7.14.15.23.28; 15,4.6.7.10.14. The fact that the impt. is only found twice in ch. 17 (1.17)—the Father is addressed—cannot be pressed since Jesus is no longer speaking to the disciples. The use of the impt. in chs. 13-16 is, however, in itself significant. Cf. 13,24.27.29; 14,1(bis).11(bis).27(bis).31; 15,4.7.9.18; 16,24.33.

<sup>144</sup> Westcott, ad loc.

<sup>145</sup> Bultmann, 381, n. 13.

8,51.52; 15,20. The aorists are ingressive, the perfect stresses the abiding result of the action posited in the past.

Jn 17,3.6-8 gives us the key to the passages considered above. Jn 8,31.32 had stated that, by remaining in the word, one is a *true disciple*, comes to know the truth which sets free from sin. 8,51f had related *eternal life* to keeping the word. 15,7-8 had shown that, if the words of Jesus remain in the Eleven, the Father will be *glorified* because they will bear much fruit and *become disciples*. All these themes are now brought together. *The disciples* (true disciples) *have kept the word, they have come to know* what may best be termed the “truth” (i.e., what Jesus has revealed about himself and God, cf. v. 17) and *this is eternal life*.<sup>146</sup> *The Eleven are presented in chapter 17 as “true disciples”, firmly established in the faith.* They are already in possession of “knowledge” (ἐγνώσαν, ἐγνώκαν) which was seen as still to come in chapter 14 (cf. vv. 7ff.20). The object of this knowledge is expressed in the ὅτι-clauses (vv. 7f). The purpose of Jesus’ coming was to reveal the “name” of the Father (that is: to reveal God as his Father).<sup>147</sup> This he did (v. 6) and thereby glorified the Father (v. 4). He can thus say that he has accomplished the work entrusted to him (v. 4). It is accomplished because the disciples have come to know both Jesus and the Father. The idea of true discipleship and bearing fruit is implicit in the δεδόξασμαι of Jesus (v. 10).<sup>148</sup>

All these themes find their unity in the λόγος, ῥήματα of Jesus which have been received *and kept* by the disciples. The reception of the word is considered both in its inceptive act (ἐλαβον) and in its abiding reality (τὸν λόγον σου τετήρηκαν). The first results in the “realization” of Jesus’ identity (ἐγνώσαν), the second in a growing, lasting penetration of this truth (ἐγνώκαν). The knowledge the disciples have (νῦν ἐγνώκαν) is not viewed as a static but as a dynamic reality: αὕτη δέ ἐστιν ἡ αἰώνιος ζωή, ἵνα γινώσκωσιν ... (v. 3), “the present tense (γινώσκωσιν) marking that continual growth in the knowledge of God”.<sup>149</sup> This knowledge, already possessed, must

<sup>146</sup> We have seen (above, pp. 384ff) that the “work” of Jesus is to give eternal life. Jn now explains that this is to know God and Jesus Christ, whom he sent (v. 3).

<sup>147</sup> Cf. Bernard, 569; Westcott, ad loc.

<sup>148</sup> Cf. Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 174-181. The same thought is expressed at 17,10 and 15,8.

<sup>149</sup> Bernard, ad loc.

endure (and increase). Jesus therefore prays that the Father ensure that this "work" go on (17,17; comp. 8,32 and 17,6c).<sup>150</sup>

Chapter 17 also casts light on another aspect of "keeping the word" we have already mentioned: the disciples will win men over to Christ to the extent in which they themselves will be penetrated by the "word". At 17,20 Jesus prays *περὶ τῶν πιστευόντων διὰ τοῦ λόγου αὐτῶν εἰς ἐμέ*. "Their" word is actually not "their" word, but rather the word Jesus gave them, words he himself received from the Father (17,8a), the word of the Father (v. 14a). It is obvious that the disciples can lead men to Christ only insofar as they themselves have received the word and have this word abiding in them, insofar as they "keep it".<sup>151</sup> Hence the equivalence found at 15,20d: The word of the Father is the word of Jesus, the word of Jesus becomes that of the disciples if his words remain in them (15,7-8) for this is what makes disciples of them and allows them to bear fruit (15,8).

All the texts in which *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* and the parallel expression *ἐν τῷ λόγῳ μένειν* (viz., *ὁ λόγος μένειν ἐν*) occur have been briefly considered. From these considerations, it appears that *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* in the Fourth Gospel is related to the "word" of revelation Jesus speaks and means to appropriate and assimilate (to allow oneself to be penetrated by) the "word" of "truth" revealed by Jesus through a life of faith (viz., faithfulness to the word) which follows upon but goes beyond the initial act of acceptance of the "word".

If such is the case, our interpretation of the Johannine *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* (*τοὺς λόγους*) is substantially different from that advanced by most authors. In our view, it does not mean to keep the "commandment(s)" of Jesus. "To keep the word" is not unrelated to "keeping the commandments" of Jesus, but the two formulas express two distinct, although complementary, realities. We will be able to determine the exact relationship which maintains between the two only after we have considered the meaning of *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς*. For the moment all we wish to do is consider the equivalence most

<sup>150</sup> The correspondence is all the more striking in that Jn 17,6 is the only instance in the Gospel in which men are said to keep the word of God. Barrett (ad loc.) justly remarks that "this can hardly refer to the period of the ministry (especially in view of 16,31f and similar passages). John is looking back ... upon the work of the apostles".

<sup>151</sup> We are in full agreement with Barrett (421) when he writes: "That the disciples have kept the word of God means that they have loyally accepted, and faithfully proclaimed, the truth of God in Jesus".

commentators establish between *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* (τοὺς λόγους) and *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς*. It will help us understand the singularity of "keeping the word" in Jn.

The relationship between "keeping the word" and "keeping the commandments" of Jesus becomes acute precisely at Jn 14,21.23-24 because of the parallelism between vv. 21 and 23f and also because 14,24 uses the plural *ἐντολαί* (the only time that the plural is so used). That practically all commentators should equate *τηρεῖν τοὺς λόγους* and *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς* at 14,21.23f is, therefore, somewhat understandable. What is less intelligible is their attempt to interpret *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* at 14,23 as "obedience to the command" of Christ and then to have this interpretation cover all the instances in which the formula *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* occurs in Jn. Such an approach obviously disregards the meaning both *λόγος* and *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* (viz., ἐν τῷ λόγῳ μένειν) has elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel.

It may appear that we are here contradicting ourselves. We took pains to show the equivalence which exists between מצוה — דבר; λόγος — ἐντολή; (שׁמר דבר) and (שׁמר מצוה) (מצות); *τηρεῖν* (φυλάσσειν) τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους) and *τηρεῖν* (φυλάσσειν) τὴν ἐντολήν (τὰς ἐντολάς). We further maintained that the Johannine *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* has been derived from Dt,<sup>152</sup> where *λόγος*, to indicate the whole of the Law, is a central concept and where *τὸν λόγον φυλάσσειν* means to keep the Law, the precepts of the Law. We do not deny (on the contrary!) that *τὸν λόγον τηρεῖν* in the Fourth Gospel has overtones<sup>153</sup> which recall the keeping of the precepts of the Law and, therefore, would seem to refer to keeping the precept(s) of Jesus. However, we believe that "to keep the word" and "to keep the commandments" do not have the same meaning in Jn.

If this is the case, two questions immediately arise: 1) Why did Jn use a formula which evokes the keeping of the Law and its precepts? 2) Why did Jn use a formula (to indicate the life of faith) which is closely related to that he used for indicating the keeping of Christ's commandments?

<sup>152</sup> In considering *ἐντολή* and *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς*, we shall develop the analogies between Jn and Dt more fully and attempt to show how deeply indebted the Fourth Gospel is to Dt for its terminology and for its presentation of the position of the disciples with regard to the "word" and "commandments" of Jesus.

<sup>153</sup> This is particularly clear at 8,55 where *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* comes very close to meaning "keeping the command (*τηρεῖν τὴν ἐντολήν*) of the Father"—an expression Jn never uses.

1) Here the considerations advanced when considering the use of *τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν* and *τὸ ἔργον τοῦ θεοῦ ποιεῖν* in the Fourth Gospel can be of assistance. Jn takes up a Jewish formula and gives it a new content in order to bring out the novelty of Christianity with respect to Judaism and, at the same time, to mark a certain continuity between Christianity and Judaism. "To keep the word" was the essence of Deuteronomic Law and had a deep influence on Judaism. In Jn "to keep the word" takes on a new meaning : to become firmly rooted in the faith, in the word of revelation received from Jesus. The "word" which is to be kept after the coming of Christ is no longer the Law, but in keeping the word of Jesus one is, in some way, faithful to the exhortation of Dt "to keep the word" !

2) The second point will become clear only after *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς* has been considered. We will have to anticipate some of our conclusions. By using two expressions (*τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* and *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς*) which are practically synonymous in the Jewish tradition (Dt in particular) and by relating them so intimately (Jn 14,21.23-24 !) Jn eliminated any further temptation that might have arisen of interpreting the "keeping of the commandments" in a sense that would be too close to that of "keeping the Law". Keeping the word and keeping the commandments go hand in hand—Christ is norm and foundation, as well as object, of the dynamic forces, faith and love, which lie at the root of both keeping the word *and* the precepts. *Τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* and *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς* are inseparable, but this does not mean that they are not distinct. Bultmann wrote : "Die Einheit des *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* und des *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς* besagt, dass im echten Glauben die Begründung für alles zukünftige Tun gegeben ist".<sup>154</sup> This is true, but the question of the relationship between the two must be raised. We have tried to show that "echter Glaube" means "remaining in", "keeping the word" and cannot be simply understood as "obedience to a command"<sup>155</sup> or "keeping the commandments". It is rather that perseverance in the faith which leads to knowledge of the truth and constitutes the true disciple. This faith is, in turn, operative. The true disciple cannot remain in the word without loving his brethren and keeping the commandments. The *ἐντολή* — *ἐντολαί* of Jesus are part of revelation not only because they are "his" commandments, but more fundamentally because he

<sup>154</sup> *Theologie*, 434.

<sup>155</sup> Vs. Bultmann, 227, n. 5.

*revealed* the love and obedience he commanded.<sup>156</sup> We therefore disagree with Bultmann<sup>157</sup> when he gives *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον* the meaning: "Gehorsam gegenüber einem Befehl". Nor does it mean "Gehorsame Annahme des Wortes", but rather: "die Treue dieses Gehorsams". As for "die aus dem Glauben folgende Lebensführung" it is stressed in the expression: *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς*.

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<sup>156</sup> It is here that we would introduce the idea of the "Nachfolge" of the disciples which must go to the point of self-sacrifice (Jn 17,17-19). Cf. Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 186-190.

<sup>157</sup> Cf. *TWNT* VI, 227, 35-40 and 230, 10-14.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### THPEIN TΑΣ ENTOΛΑΣ

As in the case of *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον*, we wish to examine the possible origin of the Johannine *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς* and ask whether it cannot be considered an obvious allusion to “keeping the commandments, the Law” (a more obvious allusion than *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον*!). We will further enquire into the meaning the expression assumes in Jn. From this investigation we hope to draw some conclusions concerning the purpose Jn might have been pursuing in his use of *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς*.

#### A) *The possible background and source of the Johannine τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς (ἐντολή and ἐντέλλεσθαι)*

a) **צוה — מצוה** : *ἐντέλλεσθαι — ἐντολή in the OT (MT and LXX) and in the Jewish tradition*

In the Hebrew (Masoretic) and in the Greek (LXX) versions of the OT, the correspondence **צוה**—*ἐντέλλεσθαι*; **מצוה**—*ἐντολή* is almost perfect.

*Ἐντέλλεσθαι* translates **צוה** in the overwhelming majority of cases.<sup>1</sup> The two verbs are used to express commands given by men, but especially God's commanding of nature and history as Lord and master over the lives of individuals (the prophets especially) and nations. Most often they designate the act whereby God issues commands to his chosen people, Israel, in the form of Law.<sup>2</sup> *Ἐντολή* translates **מצוה** some 50 times. In eight cases only is **מצוה** translated by some other term. In the vast majority of cases, *ἐντολή* designates a command which is of divine origin.<sup>3</sup> The association of *ἐντολή*—**מצוה** with the *divine* command can be seen in the rather frequent<sup>4</sup> instances in which the LXX translates terms *other than*

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<sup>1</sup> *Προτάσσειν* is also used sporadically (13 ×), *ἐπιτάσσειν* is found 4 ×.

<sup>2</sup> For this and the following points, see esp. M. J. O'Connell, "The Concept of Commandment in the Old Testament", *TS* 21 (1960) 351-403, 352ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Ἐντολή*—**מצוה** for a human command first makes its appearance in 1 K (LXX = 3 K) and is then found primarily in the narrative books of the OT.

<sup>4</sup> O'Connell, basing himself on the statistics of S. H. Blank ("The LXX Renderings of the OT Terms for Law", *HebUnCollAnn* 7 (1930) 259-283), writes: "There are 23 such instances ... in 16 of these *ἐντολή* translates ... **פְּקֻדִּים**" (*art. cit.*, 354f). We have found that his figures are inexact. *Ἐντολή* translates **פְּקֻדִּים** 18 × (16 × in Ps 118(119), to which Ps 102(103), 18 and 110(111), 7 must be added). It translates the other Hebrew terms listed above 8 × (v.g., Dt 16, 12; 17, 19; Jos 5, 6; 3 K 9, 4; 4 K 21, 8; 2 Chron 12, 1; 30, 16; Ez 18, 21). To these 26 cases the following 10, which are difficult

מצוה by ἐντολή. 'Εντολή is found translating דְּבַר, חֻקָּה, תּוֹרָה, דְּבַר הַתּוֹרָה, חֻקִּים, פְּקֻדִּים, בְּרִית, קוֹל (terms which are not usually translated by ἐντολή) when and only when the terms indicate a *divine* command.<sup>5</sup> This shows to what an extent the "divine command" had become identified with ἐντολή for the Greek translators.

The divine command itself is associated almost exclusively with the Torah as a whole or with its individual precepts. We used the word "Torah" rather than "Law" because the word "Law", as von Rad<sup>6</sup> has pointed out, *could* be misleading. It is difficult to say "wo Israel das, was der Dogmatiker unter 'Gesetz' versteht, auch selbst eindeutig als 'Gesetz' gehört hat ... besonders schwer in den Zeugnissen des älteren Jahweglaubens".<sup>7</sup>

The "commandments" of God were not, at least at the outset, legal prescriptions in the ordinary sense of the word, a "code of law". They were considered, at the outset, against the background of Election and Covenant and were, by nature, the manifestation of God's salvific will. The revelation of the "commandments" was a "Heilsergebnis ersten Ranges".<sup>8</sup> In the first four books of the Pentateuch, when ἐντολή is not used in conjunction with other "legal" terms, the emphasis is not on the thing commanded, but on the fact that the commandment is the expression of the divine will. This is especially true of Dt. The Torah (Law) is still seen as an indissoluble whole—as the revelation of the one saving will of God. Emphasis is given to this aspect of the Law, rather than to its content—the individual "precepts", *what* is commanded. Observance of the Law, on the other hand, is also "unified" because reduced to one principle: the love of God (objective genitive). It is this love, response to the Covenant love of God, which manifests itself in the keeping of the Law ("commandments").

Once these reservations have been made, however, we must immediately add that the Torah gradually became more and more what we would call "law" in the strict sense. Such an eminent authority as Bonsirven is able to write that the predominant feature of the Torah "est celui de règle pratique, de loi".<sup>9</sup> Moore

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to evaluate either because of divergence among the major LXX versions (A, B, S) or because of divergences between the MT and the LXX, should be added: Dt 11,1; 28,14.15; 3 K 2,3; 3,14; 11,11.38; Ps 118(119),57.139; Jer 19,15. A couple of examples will suffice. Jer 19,15: MT = דְּבַר, LXX A = λόγος, B, S = ἐντολή; Ps 118(119),57; MT = דְּבַר, LXX S<sup>1</sup> = ἐντολή, S<sup>2</sup>, A = νόμος. Dt 28,15 and 3 K 2,3: MT = חֻקָּה וּמִצְוָה, LXX = ἐντολή (the ἐντολή could be rendering מִצְוָה or חֻקָּה, or it could be rendering both.)

<sup>5</sup> O'Connell (*ibid.*, 354) affirms that ἐντολή is used by the LXX to translate a word other than מִצְוָה only twice when human commands are so designated. We have found three instances: 2 Chron 29,25 (command of David); Prov 15,5 (parental commands); Dan LXX 3,12 (command of the king).

<sup>6</sup> *Theologie*, I, 207; 209 and esp. 214.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 214.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 207.

<sup>9</sup> Bonsirven adduces the following reasons: a) the most ancient use of the term Torah (Dt 17,11; Lev 6,2; 7,37; etc.) has the sense of "Law"; b) in Rabbinism the study of the Torah was "juridical" study; c) the LXX νόμος, as a rendering of תּוֹרָה,



also admits that in Judaism, as in all revealed religions, the "law" "forms a large part of revelation; and partly under the necessity of new situations, partly by scholastic interpretation and casuistic development ... becomes progressively more comprehensive and more minute".<sup>10</sup> This casuistic development and increasing emphasis on the "legal" aspect of the Torah sets in, as Noth has shown, the moment in which the Torah has become divorced from its historical setting, after the Exile.<sup>11</sup> Noth sees a landmark of this evolution in Dt.<sup>12</sup> The recurring expressions: "to keep the Law, the commandments", "to walk in the ways of God", reflect the initial stage of what this author calls making "das Gesetz zu einer auf eigenen Füßen stehende Macht".<sup>13</sup> It is significant that "dans le Deutéronome seulement ... le mot (Torah) commence à designer indubitablement l'ensemble d'une législation".<sup>14</sup> The evolution of the meaning given to מצוה, ἐντολή in the Jewish tradition runs parallel with this evolution in the manner of conceiving the Torah. Dt represents the initial stage of this process.

We insist on Dt because, in the OT, the word מצוה—ἐντολή is, to a great extent, inseparable from the Deuteronomic tradition and Dt in particular. Not only is the term used with the greatest frequency in this tradition, it is also the term which expresses the whole spirit of Dt.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, as we shall see, the use of מצוה—ἐντολή in Dt offers striking parallels to the Johannine usage.

In Dt מצוה—ἐντολή are used to designate the Law. Since the Law is seen as a unified whole, it is not surprising that the singular מצוה should be found as a designation for the whole Law.<sup>16</sup> This usage is especially evident in those cases<sup>17</sup> where the singular מצוה is not used in conjunction with other "legal" terms;<sup>18</sup>

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reflects the "legal" nature of the Torah (*op. cit.*, I, 248, and nn. 2, 3, 4). Moore (*Judaism*, I, 263) dislikes the word "Law", but admits there is no better English equivalent, provided "Law" be understood as including the whole of revelation, rather than mere "legislation". J. Pedersen (*Israel, Its Life and Culture* (London, 1926), III, 161) renders תורה by "instruction" (cf. also Moore, *ibid.*, III, 81, n. 28); W. F. Albright (*From the Stone Age to Christianity* (Garden City, 1957), 205) translates "doctrina", "teaching".

<sup>10</sup> *Judaism*, I, 235.

<sup>11</sup> "Die Gesetze im Pentateuch", in: *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (München, 1960), 9-142, 113f.

<sup>12</sup> *Art. cit.*, 115f.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

<sup>14</sup> Cazelles, *DBS* V, 498.

<sup>15</sup> "The whole spirit of Deuteronomy is expressed by this term (מצוה); for Deuteronomy the Law is a series of divine precepts, nothing else; the term "precept", "commandment", without any accessory meaning, seemed to the legislator most apt to express the contents of the "torah" ... This idea, as is well known, remained dear to Judaism after the exile and in Christian times". J. van der Ploeg, "Studies in Hebrew Law, I, The Terms", *CBQ* 12 (1950) 248-259, 258.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. von Rad, *Theol.*, I, 213.

<sup>17</sup> Dt 6,25; 8,1; 11,8.22; 15,5; 17,20; 19,9; 27,1; 30,11; 31,5—this last has no Greek equivalent.

<sup>18</sup> מצוה—ἐντολή is the only term for the Law so used in isolation. Cf. O'Connell, *art. cit.*, 357, n. 21.

but even when used with other legal terms, the singular מצוה has the same force.<sup>19</sup>

The singular is more than a collective singular. It stresses the essence of the whole Law for Dt: the commanding will of God. The Law can, for this reason, be called "commandment" (מצוה). Curiously enough, the LXX translates these singulars by a plural (ἐντολαί) in all cases except one (Dt 30,11). This is an indication of the direction the meaning of the term מצוה will take in later Judaism. As the "nomistic" approach to the Torah increases, the word מצוה—ἐντολή will be affected: the emphasis will shift from the will of God to the precepts themselves, seen as "works" to be accomplished.<sup>20</sup>

Already in the MT text of Dt the plural מצות (ἐντολαί in the LXX) frequently occurs to designate not only the whole Law (the Decalogue in particular),<sup>21</sup> but also the particular commandments.<sup>22</sup> It is exact to say, with O'Connell,<sup>23</sup> that Dt emphasizes not the objective content of the Law, but the will of God, and that this is brought out especially by the use of the singular מצוה (and ἐντολή). The fact remains, however, that the will of God is expressed concretely in the Law. Nor should the unity lead us to lose sight of the multiplicity. Even in the MT of Dt, the plural predominates perspicuously over the singular. The inner unity of the מצוה—ἐντολή is counterbalanced by the diversity of the מצות—ἐντολαί, which are the ramifications of the מצוה in all the spheres of practical life. Dt 12-16 contains a multiplicity of precepts which should regulate the life of God's people. The prescriptions of the Law are very much present behind the "will of God" and very clearly defined. At any rate, Dt cannot be considered in isolation. Already in the Deuteronomic tradition, Ps 119 shows an evolution which cannot be disregarded.<sup>24</sup> As time goes on, the emphasis shifts from the activity of God to that of man and the activity of man is no longer seen as the response to the initiative and act of God.<sup>25</sup> God is left with the task of reacting to the behaviour

<sup>19</sup> Dt 5,31; 6,1; 7,11. It is significant that, in these three cases, מצוה is in the sing., חק and משפט in the plur.

<sup>20</sup> O'Connell (*art. cit.*, 358) maintains that the LXX either missed the point of the sing. מצוה or considered it a collective sing. In our opinion the use of the plur. reflects a change in perspective in the way of considering the Law.

<sup>21</sup> In general we can say that when מצות—ἐντολαί are used in isolation, as in the stereotyped expression שמר את מצות (Dt 4,2; 8,6; 11,28; 28,13; etc.), it would have this force. It is clear, however, that the plur. never has the same unitive force as the sing.

<sup>22</sup> This is the case when מצות—ἐντολαί are used in conjunction with other "legal" terms such as משפטים, חקים (Dt 4,40; 6,17; 8,11; 10,13; etc.). The sing. מצוה is only found once to indicate particular commandments (Dt 26,13a)—S and the LXX have the plur.; ἐντολή is found in this sense in 26,13b—the MT has the plur.

<sup>23</sup> *Art. cit.*, 360.

<sup>24</sup> See what Noth has to say on this, *art. cit.*, 116f, 120f and esp. 127, where he writes that Ps 1; 19; 119 and similar texts "zeigen schon die Formulierungen, wie 'das Gesetz' zum Gegenstand einer vom Menschen zu vollziehenden persönlichen Wertung geworden ist und vom Menschen auch eine solche persönliche Einstellung gegenüber 'dem Gesetz' erwartet wird".

<sup>25</sup> Noth (*art. cit.*, 125) puts it in these words: "Jetzt wurde im Verhältnis zwischen Gott und Mensch das Verhalten des (einzelnen) Menschen auf Grund des voraussetzungslos gültigen Gesetzes zum entscheidend Wichtigen".

of man "nach Masstabe des Gesetzes".<sup>26</sup> Material fulfilment of the "commandments" assumes such great importance that it obscures the fundamental aspect (the will of God, the love of God) which Dt had emphasized. The Apocrypha bear witness to the fact that observance of the מצות, both written and oral, becomes the all-important factor: the supreme rule is to observe and love the commandments.<sup>27</sup> The Law is made into an absolute entity!

In Judaism a point is reached where the Torah is said to contain 613 מצות: 365 מצות לא תעשה and 248 מצות עשה. The process reaches its term when, in Rabbinical literature, מצוה becomes a technical term for "works".<sup>28</sup> This development, although a deviation from the true spirit of the Law, was not a creation "ex nihilo". It is to be traced back to the inescapable fact that God revealed his will. The moment in which this will is expressed (necessarily in the form of "law"), the road is open to the evolution just traced: the Torah becomes "law", the מצות—ἐντολαί become "legal prescriptions" which must be done ("works").

It is against this whole background that ἐντολή in Jn must be considered. That the term מצוה—ἐντολή was associated with the legal prescriptions of the Law right up to the Christian era is shown not only by the Apocrypha,<sup>29</sup> the literature of Qumran<sup>30</sup> and the Rabbinical literature,<sup>31</sup> it is eloquently attested to by the NT itself.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>27</sup> Test R 3,8; 4,5; Test L 6,7; 13,1; 14,4; Test Jud 13,1,7; 18,6; 26,1; 23,5; Test Iss 5,1; 6,1; Test Z 5,1; Test D 5,1; Test N 3,2; 8,10 and *passim* in the Test XII. As for the other writings, cf. Jub 1,5,10; 7,20; 20,3,7; 21,4; 30,21; 33,19; Ps Sol 14,1; Ass Mos 3,12; 12,10; Hen (Slavonic) 31,1; 65,5; 4 Esd 8,27; 14,3,4; 2 Bar 38,4; 44,3,7; 46,5; and *passim*.

<sup>28</sup> See what has been said above, ch. 11, n. 55.

<sup>29</sup> To limit ourselves to the Test XII, cf. Test L 14,4; Test Iss 5,1; Test Z 10,2; Test D 5,1; Test N 8,7; Test A 6,3; 7,5; Test B 10,3. We have singled out those instances in which ἐντολή is mentioned together with νόμος, but ἐντολή always has the sense "precepts of the Law" in the Test XII, even when they refer to the precepts of the Patriarchs. On the equivalence "command"—"Law" in the Apocalyptic literature, see esp. Rössler, *op. cit.*, 46f.

<sup>30</sup> מצוה is used only sporadically in Qumran, except in CD, where it plays an important role and indicates the precepts of the Torah, as understood, enlarged upon and defined by the Sect. The clearest texts are CD 5,21, where the מצות are those given "through Moses and through the holy Anointed one" and CD 3,8, where the מצות are those of the "teacher" (either God or Moses). Significant is the fact that מצוה is found in polemical passages directed against those who do not accept the radical interpretation of the Torah proposed by the Sect or against the members of the Sect who are not faithful to the "new" Covenant they accepted when they joined the Community (CD 2,18,21; 3,6,8; 5,21; 8,19; 9,7; 10,3; 19,5,32). The מצות in CD 3,2,6,8,12 refer to the cultic precepts of the Torah, as understood and lived by the Sect, and which were such an essential part of the Torah in their eyes. In CD 19,2,5 מצוה is used in immediate connection with the Torah. CD 19,2 refers to Dt 7,9 and the Torah is mentioned thrice in vv. 3-4. Although the מצוה are generally left unspecified, as in

The use made of ἐντολή in the non-Johannine writings of the NT presents an impressive uniformity. We wish to turn our attention briefly to these writings because they manifest in the clearest way possible that, in the whole of the primitive Christian tradition anterior to Jn, ἐντολή was identified with the precepts of the Law.

Ἐντολή is used in the "profane" sense of "human command" only three times in the NT (Jn 11,50; Act 17,16; Col 4,10). In the Synoptics, ἐντολή always designates the precepts, commandments of the Law, the Decalogue in particular.<sup>32</sup> In Mt ἐντολή is invariably used in combination with νόμος;<sup>33</sup> in Mk ἐντολή is associated with Moses<sup>34</sup> (the word νόμος does not occur in Mk). Pauline usage is in keeping with that of the Synoptics.<sup>35</sup> In the Epistle to the Hebrews, ἐντολή is always linked with νόμος and designates the precepts of the Mosaic Law.<sup>36</sup> There are only three texts which depart from this usage.<sup>37</sup>

From this brief summary, we can gather that ἐντολή, prior to Jn (we have

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CD 2,18.21; 3,2.8.12; 5,21; 8,19; 10,3; 19,2.5.32, there is at times a reference to a specific precept of the Law. CD 3,6 refers to Lev 17,10ff; CD 7,2 and 9,7 to Lev 19,17. The connection of מצות with the precepts of the Torah is also evidenced by other writings of Qumran. The Psalmist in 1QH counts himself among the elect who love God and keep his מצות (1QH 16,13.17—the reference, as in CD 19,2, is to Dt 7,9) and asks to be preserved from anything that may cause him to fall away from the חוקי ותורה (1QH 16,15). In 1QSb 1,1 those who keep God's מצות are those who cling to his holy Covenant (מחוקי בברית קודש) v. 2), i.e., those who belong to the Community. 1QpH 5,5 opposes the members of the Community, who have kept God's מצות, to the רשעי עמו—those who did not help the "Teacher" against the "Man of lies", who "rejected the Torah in the midst of their whole Community" (vv. 8-9). Particularly striking are the two instances (1QS 8,17; CD 10,3) in which the sing. מצוה is used absolutely to designate the Law as a whole (as interpreted by the Community)—usage which is identical to that found in the MT of Dt (see above, p. 433).

<sup>31</sup> See above, p. 382.

<sup>32</sup> Mt 5,18f; 15,3; 19,17; 22,36.38.40; Mk 7,8.9; 10,5.19; 12,28.31; Lk 18,20; 23,56. Lk 1,6 and 15,29 are also to be interpreted in this sense, although the connection with the Torah is less obvious.

<sup>33</sup> Mt 5,17-19; 22,36-40; 15,3 (comp. 15,6 א\*<sup>b</sup>, C). In 19,17 the word νόμος does not occur, but the precepts quoted are those of the Decalogue.

<sup>34</sup> Mk 7,7-10; 10,3-5.

<sup>35</sup> Rom 7 (*passim*); 13,9; Eph 2,15; 6,2. We must point out that some exegetes (notably S. Lyonnet) hold that ἐντολή in Rom 7 refers to the precept given to Adam in Paradise. This does not affect the question considerably—we would be in the presence of a projection of the Law and ἐντολή into the past.

<sup>36</sup> Heb 7,5.16.18; 9,19.

<sup>37</sup> 1 Cor 14,37; 1 Tim 6,14; 1 Cor 7,19. In the first case ἐντολή designates the prescriptions of Paul given in the name of Jesus; in the second it probably refers to the apostolic charge; in the third it would seem to designate the precepts of the Law (comp. Rom 2,25-26) which, however, are to be understood in the light of Gal 5,6; 6,15 and Rom 13,9.

considered neither the Johannine writings nor 2 Pt), has the distinct meaning of "precepts, commandments of the Mosaic Law". Except with this meaning, the term is found very rarely. We notice a tendency to avoid a term which is identified with the "old order" unless it be to refer to this old order itself. Paul, in particular, seems to avoid *ἐντολή* and prefer substitutes (v.g., *ἐπιταγή*) when speaking of "commands". *Ἐντολή*, as a term to designate the "commands" of God given through Jesus, the Apostles, or for the "commands" of Jesus himself, is conspicuously absent in the NT<sup>38</sup> (outside of the Johannine writings), even though *ἐντέλλεσθαι* can be used in this sense.<sup>39</sup> The verb, however, predominantly indicates the activity of Moses or of God commanding in the form of Law.<sup>40</sup>

It would appear that it is only Jn (the Johannine tradition) who (which) dares use a consecrated term for the "precepts" of the Law in a totally new context!

Before passing on to the Johannine usage, a few words must be said about *שמר מצות*, *φυλάσσειν τὰς ἐντολάς* in the OT and in the Jewish tradition.

b) *שמר מצות*—*φυλάσσειν* (τηρεῖν) τὰς ἐντολάς in the OT (MT and LXX) and in the Jewish tradition

In view of what has already been said above with regard to *שמר דבר* (ים)—*φυλάσσειν τὸν λόγον* (τοὺς λόγους), we can be very brief.

The connotation *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς* would have for Jewish ears is unmistakable: it would be associated with *שמר מצות*—*φυλάσσειν* (τηρεῖν) τὰς ἐντολάς, a consecrated expression for "keeping the precepts of the Law". *שמר מצות*, *שמר מצות* with this meaning is very frequent in the Hebrew Bible (MT), in Dt and the Deuteronomic writings in particular.<sup>41</sup> The LXX renders the formula by *φυλάσσειν τὰς ἐντολάς* (τὴν ἐντολήν), which is likewise very frequent in the LXX, especially in Dt and the Deuteronomic writings.<sup>42</sup> *Τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς* is never found in the LXX.

Outside of the OT *שמר מצות* is current in Qumran<sup>43</sup> and *φυλάσσειν τὰς ἐντολάς*, *τὴν ἐντολήν* is current in the Test XII<sup>44</sup> to refer to the observance of the precepts of the Law. Strangely enough, *φυλάσσειν τὰς ἐντολάς* is never found in the NT,<sup>45</sup> but one cannot speak of a preference for *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς* because the expression *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς*, outside of the writings of the Johannine

<sup>38</sup> But see 1 Cor 14,37 and 1 Tim 6,14.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Mt 17,9; 28,20; Act 1,2; 13,47.

<sup>40</sup> Moses: Mt 19,7; Mk 10,3; Jn 8,5; Heb 9,20. God: Mt 15,4. Lk 4,10 and Mt 4,6 are OT quotations.

<sup>41</sup> The occurrences are so frequent that the reader may be referred to Mandelkern's Concordance.

<sup>42</sup> The reader is referred to Hatch and Redpath's Concordance.

<sup>43</sup> 1QP<sup>H</sup> 5,5; 1QH 16,13.17; 1QS<sup>b</sup> 1,1; CD 2,18.21; 3,2.3; 16,7; 19,2; 20,22.

<sup>44</sup> Test Iss 5,1 (β); Test Z 5,1; 10,2; Test D 5,1; Test A 6,3 (διατηρεῖν); Test Jos 19,11; Test B 3,1; 10,3.5.

<sup>45</sup> *Φυλάσσειν* is used in connection with *ἐντολαί* at Mk 10,19 = Lk 18,20, but the formula *φυλάσσειν τὰς ἐντολάς* as such is not found.

tradition, is found very rarely <sup>46</sup> (the Johannine tradition, we have seen, prefers *τηρεῖν* to *φυλάσσειν*). The only true occurrence of the formula *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολὰς* is to be found in Mt 19,17, where it refers to keeping the precepts of the Law (Act 15,5 and Jas 2,10 use the expression *τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον*).

B) *The meaning of ἐντολή, ἐντέλλεσθαι and τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολὰς in the Fourth Gospel*

Ἐντολή in Jn is used only once in a non-specific sense (11,57); it otherwise indicates the command(s) given to Jesus by the Father (10,18; 12,49.50; 15,10) or the command(s) given to the disciples by Jesus (13,34; 14,15.21; 15,10.12).

The plural *ἐντολαί* is used relatively frequently with *τηρεῖν*, the singular *ἐντολή* is never so used. Jesus "keeps" the commands of the Father (15,10), the disciples are asked to "keep" the commands of Jesus (14,15.21; 15,10).

Ἐντέλλεσθαι is found once with the Father as subject and Jesus as indirect object (14,31), twice with Jesus as subject and the disciples as indirect object (15,14.17). Jesus does as the Father commanded him (14,31); the disciples are called friends if they do what is commanded by Jesus (15,14).

The combination *ποιεῖν ... ἐντέλλεσθαι* is not equivalent, as we shall see, to *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολὰς*. The *ἐντέλλεσθαι* is to be related to the *ἐντολή*,<sup>47</sup> rather than to the keeping of the *ἐντολαί*.

The Father's *ἐντολή*, *ἐντέλλεσθαι* always has Jesus as indirect object. The Father's *ἐντολή* is that Jesus lay down his life in order to take it up again (10,18) and what Jesus is to speak (12,49). The object of the Father's *ἐντέλλεσθαι* is Jesus' death and resurrection (14,31). The *ἐντολαί* are left undefined (15,10).

Jesus' *ἐντολή*, *ἐντέλλεσθαι* always has the disciples as indirect object. His *ἐντολή* is that the disciples love one another as he has loved them (14,34; 15,12); the object of his *ἐντέλλεσθαι* is mutual love (15,17). At 15,14 the object is not specified, but the context (cf. vv. 12.17) seems to indicate that here too the object is mutual love. The *ἐντολαί* are left undefined (14,15.21; 15,10).

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Mt 19,17; 1 Cor 7,19; 1 Tim 6,14. 1 Cor 7,19 has the substantive *τήρησις* instead of the verb; 1 Tim 6,14 has the sing. *ἐντολή*.

<sup>47</sup> See the l.v. (B, 33, L, etc.) which reads *ἐντολήν δέδωκεν* at 14,31. Jn 15,17 speaks in favour of identifying the *ἐντέλλεσθαι* with the *ἐντολή* (cf. 15,12).

a) *Ἡ ἐντολή — ἐντέλλεσθαι of the Father*

Jn did not give us any specification about the ἐντολαί of the Father; he did specify the nature of the Father's ἐντολή — ἐντέλλεσθαι.

*Jn 10,18.* Jn 10,11-18 may be considered a unit in which the relationship shepherd—sheep (the second parable, found in vv. 3b-5) is explained.<sup>48</sup> The good shepherd is the one who lays down his life for the sheep (τὴν ψυχὴν ... τίθησιν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων vv. 11.15.17. 18). The idea of Jesus' (sacrificial) death is central to the section, although the theme of mutual knowledge receives brief development in vv. 14-15a. It is this death which is the basis for the constitution and safety of the flock (comp. 11,50ff with 10,16).<sup>49</sup> Vv. 17-18 are somewhat loosely connected with the parable itself. There is no pastoral symbolism in them. The connection is rather given indirectly since they take up the "laying down (one's) life" of vv. 11.15 and elaborate on this act of the good shepherd. V. 18 tells us that it is this act of self-sacrifice (for the sheep), both death and resurrection, which is the object of the Father's ἐντολή.

*Jn 14,31.* The same thought is found expressed here. Jesus has just finished saying that the prince of the world is coming. He has no power over Jesus, yet Jesus' death will appear as the triumph of the prince of the world, of darkness over light. In reality the "coming of the prince of the world" coincides with the "hour" of Jesus, his καιρός. The apparent defeat is the victory of Jesus over the world in his death and resurrection; it is his "glorification", which manifests his love for the Father and that he does what the Father has commanded him. The ἐντέλλεσθαι of the Father is once again connected with the "exaltation" of Jesus.

*Jn 12,49.* All Jesus has said (τί εἶπω καὶ τί λαλήσω) is viewed as the carrying out of the Father's ἐντολή. The immediate context is of great importance. Vv. 44-50 close the public ministry. They speak of believing in Christ and in the Father, seeing the Father in Jesus, light and salvation, as opposed to hearing the words and not keeping them, rejecting Christ, remaining in darkness and condemnation. The λόγος of Jesus is almost hypostatized and becomes the agent of judgement (ὁ λόγος ... κρίνει αὐτόν). In a sense, we can say

<sup>48</sup> The first parable is that of the "gate" (vv. 1-3a) which is explained in vv. 7-10.

<sup>49</sup> On this, cf. Th. Müller, *Das Heilsgeschehen im Johannesevangelium* (Zürich, 1960), 34ff.

with Bultmann that here "Offenbarung" is "Wort", and that the ἐντολή of the Father embraces the whole work of (self-)revelation which has taken place during the public ministry of Jesus.

From the juxtaposition of these texts the question arises: why did Jn choose to relate the ἐντολή of the Father with the death and resurrection of Jesus on the one hand (10,18; 14,31) and with his λαλεῖν on the other (12,49)? Furthermore: what is the relationship, if any, between the two?

Schrenk<sup>50</sup> has affirmed that the ἐντολή of the Father embraces the "Gesamt-sendung" of the Son. Brown<sup>51</sup> affirms that "Jesus' whole ministry comes under the Father's command—his words; his deeds; and especially that most important of his deeds, his passion, death and resurrection". This is an oversimplification. What we in fact find in Jn is that Jesus' λαλεῖν and his death and resurrection are object of the divine command. Just how these are related or can sum up his whole mission is not so clear as it may appear at first sight.<sup>52</sup>

Bultmann's position simplifies matters. The death of Jesus is seen simply as "das sachlich notwendige Ende der Lebenshingabe, die schon in dem ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο... ihren Anfang genommen hat"<sup>53</sup> so that the glorification of Christ is seen as forming a unit with the glorification which runs all through his life.<sup>54</sup> Jn has singled out the death and resurrection as the supreme act which manifests Jesus as the Revealer,<sup>55</sup> as the work in which all Jesus has said and done assumes its true meaning and value. But then how can we explain that the ἐντολή in 12,49 is related to Jesus' λαλεῖν? The context, as we have said, shows that the ἐντολή designates Jesus' whole work of (self-)revelation in word.<sup>56</sup> We are not dealing with an act among others or with the most important act of all. The whole work of Jesus, from a certain point of view, can be summed up in his λαλεῖν.

Jn 12,49 can be said to present Jesus' public ministry as "Wort-offenbarung". Here the ἔργα — σημεῖα are not disregarded, but considered an integral part of Jesus' revelatory activity, the *stress*

<sup>50</sup> *TWNT* II, art. ἐντολή, 550, 8ff.

<sup>51</sup> Comm., 504.

<sup>52</sup> The words καθὼς ἐνετείλατό μοι ὁ πατήρ, οὕτως ποιῶ cannot be related to the "works" of Jesus (his ποιεῖν) in general, as Brown (*ibid.*) would have it. The ἐνετείλατο, and consequently the ποιεῖν of 14,31, refers directly to the oncoming events: the passion, death and resurrection. Nowhere in Jn are the "works" or "deeds", as such, object of the divine command.

<sup>53</sup> Comm., 293, ad 10,18.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> "Also eben darin, dass er für die Seinen ist und dies in seinem Tode bestätigt, ist er der Offenbarer". *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> "Word" would here be taken in the sense of "words" and "works", the "works" being considered *verba visibilia*.



being laid decisively on revelation as word ("Heilsgeschehen" as "Wortoffenbarung"). This should not make us forget that the mission of Jesus in Jn consists of word *and* deed. Bultmann has tried to reduce revelation in Jn to "Wortoffenbarung". It is undeniable that this aspect of Jesus' revelatory work predominates in Jn, but the *ἔργα* — *σημεία* cannot be disregarded. They are an integral part of Jesus' revelatory activity, which cannot be reduced to "word" purely and simply.<sup>57</sup> If the *ἔργα* in Jn can be considered "verba visibilia" it is only insofar as they "signify" or "express" something of the mystery of Christ's person. The *ἔργα*, however, are not simply "words".

This holds good for all the *ἔργα* of Jesus, but is it especially true of his death and resurrection. They simply cannot be reduced to "Wortoffenbarung", not even in the partial sense in which the "works" can be considered "words". This event occupies a central place in the whole of the NT and in the Gospels in particular. Although Jn gave his own interpretation to this central mystery of faith, he respected the emphasis laid upon it by primitive tradition. Bultmann may affirm that the "glorification" of Christ permeates his whole life, Jn holds that the glorification of Christ is linked with his death (and resurrection) in a unique manner. Death and resurrection cannot be classified as one of the *ἔργα*, even if it be considered as the greatest of them all.<sup>58</sup> It would consequently be erroneous to say that Jn wishes to have the divine *ἐντολή* embrace Jesus' word(s) (12,49) and deeds (10,18; 14,31). It would be equally erroneous to say that the "exaltation" of Jesus on the cross is simply the perfecting of the "Wortoffenbarung".

We must hold that Jn, in keeping with the primitive tradition, regards the death and resurrection of Christ as the realization *κατ' ἐξοχήν* of his salvific mission. Müller<sup>59</sup> has shown that the death of Christ in the Fourth Gospel is seen as a "besonderes Heilsgeschehen". This author maintains, against Bultmann, that the death of Christ in Jn cannot be considered a simple confirmation of Jesus' role and ministry. Even to say that it is Jesus' "manifestation" *par excellence* is not sufficient. Müller distinguishes two strains in the Johannine presentation of the *Heilsgeschehen*: one is "Offenbarungstheologie", the other "Gemeindetheologie". The latter is reflected in many

<sup>57</sup> See what has been said above, pp. 152f.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Müller, *op. cit.*, 130; Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 172 and esp. n. 125.

<sup>59</sup> *Op. cit.*, *passim*. but 39-75 in particular,

passages where the death of Christ is presented as sacrifice. Jn presupposes "die erste Auseinandersetzung der früheren Christus-gemeinde mit dem Factum des Kreuzestodes". He takes for granted that Jesus' death has salvific meaning (an accepted principle of the "Gemeindetheologie") and proceeds to stress another aspect: the word. The conviction that without the death of Christ his word has no salvific force is there, but Jn does not care to develop it. Although Jn looks upon Christ's death primarily as *Offenbarung*, in a number of texts it is presented as a "sacrifice",<sup>60</sup> an "opus extra nos, pro nobis". These texts cannot be considered heterogenous to Jn or introduced by a later hand.<sup>61</sup>

If Müller is right, we can see in Jn 10,18 a reflection of the *Gemeindetheologie*: the *ἐντολή* is related to the *sacrificial* death of Jesus. Jn 12,49 and 14,31, on the other hand, would reflect the *Offenbarungstheologie* which is peculiar to Jn. The double perspective in which Jn presents the Father's *ἐντολή* would correspond to the two strains detected by Müller. The *ἐντολή* of the Father governs the whole mission of Jesus. This mission is viewed primarily as "Wortoffenbarung" at 12,49; it is viewed as realized in a comprehensive and unique manner in the death and resurrection at Jn 10,18 and 14,31, the emphasis in 10,18 being on the sacrificial character, in 14,31 on the "Offenbarungscharakter" of Jesus' death.

#### b) *The ἐντολαί of the Father*

The use of *ἐντολαί*, as we have said, differs in two respects from that of *ἐντολή*. 1) Whereas the *ἐντολή* of the Father is well defined, his *ἐντολαί* are left indeterminate. 2) *Ἐντολαί* is used in conjunction with *τηρεῖν* (*τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς*), *ἐντολή* is not. The difference in usage indicates a difference in meaning. The way in which Jn has defined the Father's *ἐντολή* makes it impossible to treat it as a "collective" singular or as the "first" command among many. It is rather *the* command which has the mission of Christ as such (viewed as revelation and redemptive sacrifice) as its specific object. This one and indivisible mission can, however, be considered from the

<sup>60</sup> The texts in which this idea appears (1,29; 3,9-21; 10,1-30; 11,50; 12,24; 17,17.19; 13,8; 16,33) are analyzed by Müller (*op. cit.*, 39-73). The author, of course, does not deny that the death of Jesus is also "Ort der Offenbarung" (cf. 34-36). On the idea of the "Opfertod" and its relation to "Offenbarung", cf. 112ff.

<sup>61</sup> Müller, *op. cit.*, 116; 124-126.

point of view of the particular manifestations and realizations in which it is contained "in nuce" and reflected. The plural *ἐντολαί* must refer to these (we say "must" because, if *ἐντολή* is neither a collective singular nor the "first" command among many, there is no other alternative). In saying that he "keeps the commands" of his Father, Jesus would be saying: *τὰ ἀρεστὰ αὐτῷ ποιῶ πάντοτε* (8,29).

In support of this interpretation we can adduce the Johannine usage of *ἔργα* — *ἔργον* and *λόγοι* (*ρήματα*) — *λόγος*. "*Ἔργον* is not used to indicate a particular act (although it is found in this sense too), but the whole "work" of Jesus, embracing both his *ἔργα* — *σημεῖα* and his *λόγοι* — *ρήματα*. The same phenomenon appears in the variation *λόγος* — *λόγοι*. *Λόγος* embraces the whole of Jesus' *λαλεῖν*, his *λόγοι* and *ρήματα* (the individual historical utterances) and stands for his revelation as such. Both *ἔργον* and *λόγος* are more than collective singulars, more than the sum total of the *ἔργα* or *λόγοι* — *ρήματα* of Jesus. Similarly, we can say that the *ἐντολή* of the Father does not regard an individual act or the sum total of individual acts, but the mission of Jesus as a whole. The *λαλεῖν* and *δοξασθῆναι* have been singled out because they express the essence of Jesus' mission.

The carrying out of the *ἐντολή* — *θέλημα* of the Father implies "keeping" his commands (*τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς*). What these commands are is never specified.

### c) *Jesus' ἐντολή* (*ἐντέλλεσθαι*)

Like the *ἐντολή* of the Father, the *ἐντολή* of Jesus is accurately defined. *Ἐντολὴν καινὴν δίδωμι ὑμῖν, ἵνα ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους · καθὼς ἠγάπησα ὑμᾶς ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους*—(13,34; comp. 15,12.14.17).

The *ἵνα*-clause introduces the object of the *ἐντολή*. Jesus leaves but one commandment and this commandment is a "new" commandment. The "novelty" is that the love of the disciples for one another is the reflection and the outcome of Jesus' love for them.<sup>62</sup> The washing of the feet (13,14f), symbolizing Christ's death (15,13), is not only the standard, but the source of this love. The command is "new" also because delivered for the new age which is inaugurated by his glorification.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Lightfoot, 264-265.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Barrett, 377, ad loc.

The element of novelty is precisely what is lacking in the Synoptic presentation of the commandment of love. The context is totally different from that of Jn. In the first three Gospels the question is: "Which is the first, the most important of the commandments?" What we have reflected here is the Jewish problematic: trying to reduce the great number of commandments to some sort of unity.<sup>64</sup> Our Lord answers by recalling the commandment of loving God (Dt 6,5) and one's neighbour as oneself (Lev 19,18). The presentation of the (double) commandment of love both in the Synoptics and Paul is always couched in OT terms.<sup>65</sup> The commandment of fraternal charity is: "Love your neighbour as yourself". We are moving within the ambit of Judaism. The problematic is not new, the commandment of love of God and/or neighbour is not new, not even the opinion that they sum up the Law and the prophets is new.<sup>66</sup>

Jn parts roads with the Synoptics, Paul and James. There is no question of "the most important commandment" to begin with. The *ἐντολή* of fraternal love is not the greatest of the *ἐντολαί* (comp. Mt 22,37ff and Par). It is not "one" of the commandments at all (comp. Mt 19,18-19 where the commandment of fraternal charity is listed with other commandments of the Decalogue: prohibition of murder, theft, adultery, etc.). It is the one and only *ἐντολή*. John does not even mention the "first" of all the commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord your God, with all your heart, etc." The framework of the Law, so conspicuous in the Synoptics and even in Paul, has faded away. No reference to the Law is made, no reference is made to the other commandments of the Law. The "new" commandment of love does not reflect Lev 19,18. Jesus is not *repeating* an "old" commandment, *he is giving a new* commandment. It is *his* commandment (*ἡ ἐντολή ἣ ἐμή* 15,12). The *καινή* has a polemical tone. The commandment Jesus gives is not to be placed on the same footing as that found in Lev or those found in the Rabbinical writings. The *ἐντολή* is not: "Love your neighbour as yourself", but: "Love

<sup>64</sup> "The question of the lawyer (Mt 22,36), 'What is the greatest commandment of the Law?' is mooted in the Jewish schools". Moore, *Judaism*, II, 85. See pp. 83-87 for a discussion on this point, and further Schrenk, *TWNT* II, 543, 50ff.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Mt 22,37-39; Mk 12,28-31; Lk 10,25-28; (where the reference is always to Dt 6,5 and Lev 19,18) and Rom 13,8-10; Gal 5,14; Jas 2,8; (where the command of fraternal love is quoted from Lev 19,18). Further Mt 19,18-19; 5,43 = Lev 19,18.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Moore, *Judaism*, II, 83ff. It may be true, however, that Mt raises the "Liebesgebot" to new heights, as Barth (*art. cit.*, 73ff) contends.

one another as I have loved you". The norm of love has undergone a significant change and has become, at the same time, the source of love. The *ἐντολή* of Jesus is thus almost completely dissociated from the *ἐντολή* of Lev 19,18 and from the Law in general.

d) *The ἐντολαί of Jesus*

After having spoken of his *ἐντολή* (13,34), Jesus changes over to the plural and speaks of "keeping" his *ἐντολαί* (14,15.21; 15,10). We have mentioned that *τηρεῖν* is only used with the *ἐντολαί*; we have also seen that *τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς* would unfailingly evoke the keeping of the commandments of the Law. The reference to Dt 7,9 (comp. 1QH 16,13; CD 19,2) in Jn 14,15 is so obvious it needs no comment! Dt 7,9 : *ἐλεος τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτὸν καὶ τοῖς φυλάσσουσιν τὰς ἐντολάς αὐτοῦ.*

Jn 14,15 : *ἐὰν ἀγαπᾷτέ με, τὰς ἐντολάς τὰς ἐμὰς τηρήσετε.*

Precisely because of this association, Jn does not fail to make clear that the *ἐντολαί* are not those of the Law. The *ἐντολαί* Jesus asks the disciples to keep are *his* commandments : *τὰς ἐντολάς τὰς ἐμὰς* (14,15), *τὰς ἐντολάς μου* (14,21; 15,10), and he asks them to keep his *ἐντολαί* as he keeps the *ἐντολαί of the Father* (15,10). The *ἐντολαί* are always qualified as being of Jesus (or of the Father, in the case of Jesus). Given the fact that these "commandments" must also be "new", being no longer those of Moses but of Jesus, we would expect to be told something about the nature or content of these *ἐντολαί*. Yet Jn maintains the utmost reserve on this point. What he stresses is that keeping the *ἐντολαί* of Jesus means remaining in his love (15,10) and is an expression of one's love for him (14,15.21). The close association of the *ἐντολαί* (15,10) with the *ἐντολή* (15,12; comp. 15,14.17) makes it probable that the *ἐντολαί* are but the consequence or reflections, in the lives of the disciples, of the one *ἐντολή*. One cannot doubt that Jn would have been aware of the many obligations brotherly love and the love of Jesus bring with them, but he did not even care to specify that the *ἐντολαί* are obligations of this nature.

There are, in the Fourth Gospel, a few indications which may at least help us discover the meaning of the evangelist's *silence* on this point.

Jn contains no "ethical" teaching, such as we find in the Synoptics or Paul. During his whole public ministry Jesus never speaks of the

commandments of the OT or of the demands of the New Covenant (comp. Mt 5-7). Only one thing is demanded: faith (cf. Jn 6,28). It is only in the Farewell Discourses that the word *ἐντολή*, directed to the disciples, makes its appearance. Here it is used quite frequently. The *ἐντολή* — *ἐντολαί* are given to those who have believed and have already entered into a living relationship with Jesus. The omission of "ethical" teaching in chapters 1-12 becomes understandable, but one would now expect to hear Jesus trace the ways in which those who have made the act of faith are to walk. This indeed happens: a "new" *ἐντολή* is given. As for the *ἐντολαί*, their existence is presupposed, they are referred to as "known entities" and the emphasis in "keeping" them is placed on love. Not a single word is said about their objective content. One has the impression that Jn wishes to mark the distance which exists between the *ἐντολαί* of Jesus and the *ἐντολαί*—*מצוות* of the Mosaic Law and to avoid, at all costs, a formulation which would appear to give the *ἐντολαί* — *ἐντολή* of Jesus the semblance of a "new Law". Matthew's presentation of Jesus as the new Moses promulgating the "new Law" has undergone a radical transformation in Jn <sup>67</sup> (we are, of course, not suggesting that Jn knew Mt). Christ may indeed be presented as the "new Moses" by Jn, but there is a radical difference between the "new Moses" and the Moses of old. Jesus has come to reveal the "truth", he is not the promulgator of a new Law. It is not without reason that, in the Prologue, Jesus is contrasted with Moses not as the giver of a "new Law", but as the bearer of revelation and grace (1,17). That the possibility of viewing the mission of Jesus and his teaching as the promulgation of a new Law was very real can be gathered not only from Mt (who marks the absolute superiority of Jesus), but especially from the literature of the post-Johannine period,<sup>68</sup> in which Christianity itself falls victim to the legalism Jesus had done so much to combat.

In 1 Jn (and 2 Jn) the *ἐντολαί* are always linked with the *ἐντολή* (the commandment of love) of Jesus. The christological dimension of this love, however, is not so pronounced as it is in Jn. The qualification

<sup>67</sup> The stress laid by Mt on the "Liebesgebot" as the essence of the Law and the key to its interpretation (cf. Barth, *ibid.*) does not prevent him from couching the message of Jesus in terms which are dangerously close to Jewish legal piety. Jn marks the distance between Jesus and the Rabbis much more carefully.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Schrenk, *TWNT* II, 551-553.

"as I have loved you" is lacking and the "novelty" of the commandment is not given christological depth. There is also greater insistence on "keeping" the ἐντολαί—a reaction against the false teachers the Epistle is attacking. We cannot speak of nomism, but the perspective is already somewhat removed from that of Jn. It is only in 2 Pt 2,21 and 3,2 that the ἐντολή of Jesus starts to assume the aspect of a "new Law". James, moving in the same direction, will not hesitate to apply the word νόμος to the precepts of Christian morality.<sup>69</sup> The term of this development (which is actually a regression) is to be found in the Apostolic Fathers where ἐντολαί again indicates the "commandments of the Law" and the commandments of Jesus are looked upon in much the same way as those of the Mosaic Law (which Jesus himself kept!).<sup>70</sup> The "new Law" is not substantially different from the "old Law". The OT, especially in its "legal" parts, becomes the norm of Christian ethics in what is called the "altkatholische Kirche"<sup>71</sup> and it will not be long before a new nomism, quite similar to that of Judaism, will flourish.

The ulterior evolution allows us to penetrate the intention behind the reservation Jn manifests concerning the ἐντολαί of Jesus. Jn was careful to mark the distance between the Church and the Synagogue, Christianity and Judaism and, should he have tended to forget this distance, the "orthodox Jews" were there to remind him of it. He therefore took care to stress the "novelty" of the "commandment" of Jesus and avoided developing the "commandments" along lines which would be too close to Judaism.<sup>72</sup>

These considerations, however, should not lead us to disregard the element of continuity which exists between Jn and the Jewish tradition. His terminology and many of his underlying ideas come from this

<sup>69</sup> Cf. 1,25; 2,8.9.11.12; 4,11.

<sup>70</sup> *TWNT* II, 552, 40ff.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Rengstorf, *TWNT* II, 150, 12ff. Paul, like Jn, seems to have wished to avoid (but for other reasons) to make of the OT (especially in its "legal" parts) the basis of Christian ethics.

<sup>72</sup> Our view differs substantially from that of E. Hirsch, according to which the "ecclesiastical redactor" would be correcting the author of the Gospel, who presented "das Zerschneiden des Gesetzes am Wort Jesu", by having Jesus give "ein neues Gesetz" (*Das vierte Evangelium*, 95). Jn does not wish to present Jesus as a "reformer" of the Law or as the promulgator of a new Law. In this Jn is faithful to historical fact cf. H. J. Schoeps, *Aus frühchristlicher Zeit. Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Tübingen, 1950), 219.

tradition and there is good reason to believe that his presentation of the מצוה, ἐντολή of the Father and of Jesus is formed upon the model of Dt.

The parallel between Jn and Dt is striking and allows us to understand the line of continuity between Jn and the Jewish tradition, to perceive the originality of Jn, and to grasp the purpose he was pursuing.

The aspects of מצוה—ἐντολή, especially as reflected in Dt, which are important for understanding the Johannine usage are: 1) The מצוה—ἐντολή, manifestation of the saving will of God, is expressed in the Mosaic Law. 2) The ἐντολή (Law) as revelation of the divine will is a revelation of what he is. 3) The saving will of God expressed in the ἐντολή (Law) is the manifestation of his love for Israel. 4) The keeping of the commandments is the manifestation of man's loving response to the love of God. Love of God (obj. gen.) itself is commanded and is the root of obedience to the commandments. 5) The commandments ("ways of God") are not only the paths assigned to men by God, they are the paths of God himself. Keeping the commandments is "Nachfolge". Man is called to imitate God. 6) The love the Israelite must have for his fellow-Israelite is an important aspect of this "Nachfolge": brotherly love reflects God's love for Israel.<sup>73</sup> Finally (and this last point must be viewed simultaneously on the part of God and man): 7) The ἐντολή (Law) is connected with "life". It cannot be otherwise since it is the expression of God's saving will. Keeping the ἐντολή (Law) means "to live". This connection is not proper, but is central, to Dt.<sup>74</sup>

To these points correspond, in Jn: 1) The ἐντολή of the Father is the manifestation of his salvific will, but it is not expressed in the Law. This is the fundamental difference between Jn's conception of ἐντολή and that of Judaism—the connection of the ἐντολή, ἐντολαί of God with the Law has been totally severed. The ἐντολή of the Father is not directed to all men in the form of Law, it is directed to Jesus and to Jesus alone; not only is it manifested to him directly (as it was to Moses, but not in the form of a Law to be followed by all), *it is his will* in virtue of his total unity with the Father as the υἱὸς μονογενῆς. The unity of will and purpose resulting from the unique relationship of Jesus to the Father is at the root of Jesus' ἔργον and explains why only Jesus can carry out the ἔργον of the Father (which corresponds to his ἐντολή) of giving life to the world. The ἐντολή (ἐντολαί) of the Father (God) are related intrinsically to the mission of Jesus, it is he who carries out the divine will, the salvific will of God. There is no question of the disciples obeying the ἐντολή (ἐντολαί) of God (the Father). The ἐντολή (ἐντολαί) they are called upon to obey are given by Jesus and are the expression of *his* will (which, however, is also that of the Father). The will of God for men is expressed through Jesus. The ἐντολή Jesus gives his disciples is also dissociated from the Law. It is a καινή ἐντολή and is essentially that of brotherly love *made possible*

<sup>73</sup> The commandment of fraternal love is not found in Dt (cf. Lev 19,18), but is prominent in the Deuteronomical exposition of the ἐντολή. Cf. G. E. Wright, *Deuteronomy* (New York, 1953), 401.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. 8,3; 30,15.19; 32,47; etc.; von Rad, *Theol.*, I, 207.



by Jesus. The following of the will of God, expressed through Jesus, is made possible by Jesus. As such, it is related (as *ἔργον*) to the *ἔργον* of Jesus. Jn has marked the novelty of the *ἐντολή*, *ἐντολαί* of the new order by further leaving the *ἐντολαί* (both those of the Father, but especially those of Jesus) unspecified. 2) The *ἐντολή* of the Father is manifested in the *ἔργον* of Jesus (viz., in Jesus himself). It is the revelation of the "Liebeseinheit" which exists between the Father and the Son and, as such, revelation of the Father and the Son in their mutual relationship (which constitutes the *δόξα* of Jesus). The *ἐντολή* of Jesus is manifested in the love the disciples have for one another and is also a revelation of the "Liebeseinheit" which exists between the Father and the Son because it is a reflection and a sharing in this "Liebeseinheit". 3) It is obvious that the *ἔργον* of Jesus, execution of the Father's saving will (*ἐντολή*), manifests the love of the Father (and of Jesus) for the world. The *ἔργον* of the disciples, participation in the "work" of Jesus and execution of his *ἐντολή*, also manifests this love. The object of this love, however, is no longer the "people of the Law", but the new Israel (the "world" is not excluded, but is included only insofar as it, potentially at least, belongs to the Christian community). 4) and 5) The keeping of the *ἐντολαί* is not a direct expression of the love for God but for Jesus. This idea is coupled with that of "Nachfolge", which becomes imitation of Christ. Just as Jesus' love for the Father is expressed in his obedience to what the Father commanded (14,31—the only case in which Jn speaks of the love of Jesus for the Father), so too do the disciples express their love for Jesus by keeping his *ἐντολαί* (14,15). Jesus remains "in the love" of the Father because he keeps his commandments, the disciples remain "in the love" of Jesus because they keep his commandments (15,10). 6) The commandment of fraternal love is raised to new heights. There is no command to love God or to love Jesus in Jn. Loving the brethren is to love Jesus. The *ἐντολή* of mutual love is, furthermore, not only modelled upon the love of Jesus for his disciples (cf. 14,35 where brotherly love is the "sign" of discipleship), it has its source in this love. 7) The *ἐντολή* (*ἐντολαί*) of the Father results in Jesus giving life to the world; the keeping of the *ἐντολή* (*ἐντολαί*) marks the appropriation of the gift of life by man and is itself made possible by Jesus.

### Conclusion

As in the case of the other "legal" terms considered above, there are two elements in the Johannine use of *ἐντολή* (*τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς*): 1) continuity with the Jewish tradition; 2) innovation. In attempting to understand what Jn was trying to convey through such a presentation, or the factors which conditioned his presentation, both elements must be taken into consideration.

1) The continuity with Jewish tradition. It is the same will of God which revealed itself in the Law and now reveals itself in Jesus (whose will is the will of God): the salvific will of God which results in the gift of life. The terminology of Jn and his presentation of the *ἐντολή*—*ἐντολαί* indicate this element of continuity.

2) The ἐντολή—ἐντολαί of the νόμος have given way to the ἐντολή—ἐντολαί of the Father to Jesus and to the ἐντολή—ἐντολαί of Jesus to the disciples. The will of God, once expressed in the Law, is now communicated to and realized by Jesus. In Jesus it is communicated (as the will of Jesus) to the disciples and its observance made possible. In order to mark this, Jn is careful to stress the christological convergence of the ἐντολή—ἐντολαί and to avoid presenting them (the ἐντολαί especially) in a form or manner which would associate them too closely with the Law.

The explanation of such a two-sided formulation can only be the desire (or the need) to present the new order established by Jesus along lines which would distinguish it from Judaism without appearing to be something totally foreign (or opposed) to Judaism. The key is again the idea of fulfilment; the Law has fulfilled its function with the coming of Jesus; it has been neither destroyed nor preserved intact, but transformed by being transcended. The *Sitz im Leben* which can best account for this perspective is the controversy between the (Jewish) Church and the Synagogue.

Before closing this Part, something must be said about the relationship between τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον (τοὺς λόγους) and τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς.

The point was touched upon above, but could not be treated before the whole question of ἐντολή in Jn had been dealt with. We refused to equate the two formulas. It has now become apparent why. They express correlative but distinct aspects of discipleship. Τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον is directly related to faith; τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς is directly related to love and its obligations. When Jesus asks his disciples to keep his word, he is asking them not to abandon the "truth" they have accepted, but to cling to it and allow it to permeate and transform their lives; when he asks them to keep his ἐντολαί, he is referring to his ἐντολή of brotherly love and asking them to allow the love he has made possible to radiate in all their actions. Needless to say: faith and love cannot be separated. Love for the brethren is inconceivable without faith; love for Jesus, which results in the keeping of his ἐντολαί, is impossible without faith. Faith itself, on the other hand, is not simply a matter of intellectual assent, but involves the whole person (in his love or hatred for the "light"—Jn 3,18f). It is furthermore a faith which is operative (in love).

Faith and love, notwithstanding all this, are distinct realities and, consequently, the distinction between τηρεῖν τὸν λόγον and τηρεῖν τὰς ἐντολάς should also be held. One could perhaps say that believing

and keeping the word is the foundation of the “Liebeseinheit” (love for Jesus, for the brethren) and keeping the command(ment)(s) of Jesus the constitutive element of this “Liebeseinheit”.

THE TRANSFERRAL OF SYMBOLS FOR THE LAW TO  
JESUS IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL—  
“BREAD”, “WATER” AND “LIGHT” : LIFE

In Judaism the Torah was called “bread”, “water”, “light” and was considered to be (the source of) “life”.<sup>1</sup> These are all themes which are central to the Fourth Gospel and many authors believe that Jn has consciously transferred these attributes or symbols from the Torah to Jesus.<sup>2</sup>

One must distinguish, however, between contrasts or comparisons which are explicitly made by Jn and such as are possibly made. Of the four attributes, only one is explicitly transferred from the Torah (Scriptures) to Jesus: life. The comparison between Jesus and the Torah as (the source of) “life” is explicitly made at Jn 5,39f; elsewhere Jn will insist that “life” is to be found in Jesus (1,4; 5,26), that he gives “life” (*passim*), that his words are “life” (6,63.68), that he *is the* “life” (11,25; 14,6).

The contrast between Jesus and the Torah as “bread”, “water” and “light” is not certain. There are good grounds to believe that Jn 4 and 6 contrast Jesus with the Torah as “water” and “bread”, respectively. Although the contrast between Jesus and the Torah as “light” may be present in the Fourth Gospel, the probability is not very great.

It is interesting to note that “life”, which is certainly transferred from the Torah to Jesus, is associated with the symbols “bread”, “water” and “light”. Jesus gives the “water” which gives “life” (Jn 4,14); he is (gives) the “bread” which gives “life” (6,33, etc.); he is the “light” of “life” (8,12).

If in Jn 4 the “water of the well” symbolizes the Torah and if the “bread from heaven” in Jn 6 also symbolizes the Torah, both being contrasted with Jesus as the “living water” and the “bread of

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<sup>1</sup> The references will be given when each of the terms is dealt with specifically.

<sup>2</sup> The correspondence is usually recognized by the commentaries. Cf. further Kittel, *TWNT* IV, 138-140; Glasson, *Moses*, 86-94. Some authors (e.g., E. M. Sidebottom, *The Christ of the Fourth Gospel in the Light of First-Century Thought* (London, 1961), 33f; 203ff) prefer to stress the correspondence with the attributes of Wisdom. The Law and Wisdom, as we have seen, are related, so that the two opinions are not opposed. See what is said below on Jn 1,17.

life", Jn would be contrasting Jesus with the Torah on the issue of "life". The explicit juxtaposition found at 5,39 makes this highly probable.

Our investigation will be severely limited to a cursory examination of Jn 6,26-34.49-50.45; 4,10-15 and Jn 8,12. More attention will be paid to the possible background than to an exhaustive exegesis of the passages.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### THE "BREAD OF LIFE"—JN 6,26-34.49-50.45

The texts in question are of interest to us only in view of the *possible* contrast between the "manna" (representing the Torah) and the "bread of life" (representing Jesus' teaching or Jesus himself). If we are dealing with more than a possibility, the texts will cast further light on 7,14ff, where we tried to show that the "teaching" of Jesus was being contrasted with the "Law".

In virtue of the possible parallelism between 6,26ff and 7,14ff, we may ask, at the outset, whether there are points of contact between the two pericopes.

#### *Jn 6,26ff and 7,14ff*

We have already considered the meaning of Jn 6,28 and concluded that Jesus is here inviting the Jews to *believe*—it is faith which will allow them to obtain or procure for themselves the "bread" Jesus gives.<sup>1</sup> The thought is very close to Jn 7,17, where the will to do the will of God (i.e., to believe) is the condition for "coming to know" the teaching of Jesus, viz., for coming to know Jesus himself (as ἀληθῆς and οὐ ψεύστης). The "will of God" is not mentioned at Jn 6,28f, but we have seen that the ἔργον to be done cannot be dissociated from the "command" or "will" of God which demands that it be done.<sup>2</sup> The correspondence will be all the more striking if, as we believe, the "bread of life" signifies the "teaching" (person) of Jesus. Before considering this aspect of the question we may ask if there are any indications in Jn 6 that would associate this chapter with the διδάσκειν theme we found in Jn 7,14-18.

At 6,59 we read : ταῦτα εἶπεν ἐν συναγωγῇ διδάσκων ἐν Καφαρναούμ. It is the first time Jesus is said to "teach". At 7,14 Jn will mention, for the second time, that Jesus was "teaching", this time

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<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 390ff (Jn 6,29).

<sup>2</sup> There are direct references to God's will at Jn 6,39.40, related to the activity of God in Christ (giving of life). We have shown above (see what has been said on Jn 6,29 and Chapter Eleven) that this "will" is inseparable from the "will of God" which is manifested in faith (also the activity of God, but in man).

in the Temple. Jn 6,59 indicates that the whole discourse on the "bread of life" is viewed as διδασχή. This, of course, does not yet mean that the "bread of life" *itself* symbolizes the "teaching of Jesus". Jn 6,45 is, in this respect, much more precious. Here the idea of all men being "taught" (διδασκοῖ εἶναι) by God and "learning" (μανθάνειν) from God is immediately connected with "coming to Jesus" and possessing eternal life, with the bread of life. Given the great parsimony with which Jn uses διδάσκειν (Jn 6,(45).59; 7,14.28.35; 8,20.28; 9,34; 14,26; 18,20), and μανθάνειν (6,45; 7,15), one may well ask if it is a mere coincidence that these terms occur in the discourse on "the bread of life" or whether the association was established because the "bread of life" itself stands for the "teaching" (person) of Jesus.

A) *The background of the "bread from heaven" in the OT and in the Jewish tradition*

Feuillet<sup>3</sup> has shown that the background of Jn 6 is the idea of the "messianic banquet" and that of the "banquet of wisdom",<sup>4</sup> which is but a sapiential "re-interpretation" of the messianic banquet. The presentation of the "word of God" as "food" is especially well attested in the texts of the Wisdom current (Sir 15,3; 24,21; Prov 9,5; Wisd 16,26; comp. Ps 19,11f; 119,103). The ground for the identification was prepared by Dt 8,2-3 (apart from the texts which speak of the "messianic banquet" and Is 55,1-3 in particular). A consideration of the texts just mentioned yields interesting perspectives for the interpretation of the "bread from heaven" in Jn 6.

1) In the OT the "word of God" is associated with "food" ("bread"); 2) the "word of God" (דבר, λόγος) is in turn identified with the Law,<sup>5</sup> as we have seen.<sup>6</sup> There is, consequently, an implicit association of the Law with "food" ("bread"). Of the greatest importance, in this respect, are those texts which speak of the "word of God" as food and identify the "word" or "wisdom" explicitly with the Law (the precepts), so that the Law is itself viewed as "food". Such is the case in Dt 8,2-3; Sir 24,21-23 and Wisd 16,26 (comp. also: Ps 19,11f; 119,103).

Dt 8,2-3 and Wisd 16,26 (which refers back to Dt 8,2f) must be considered together. The meaning of the text of Dt was examined when Jn 4,34 was dealt with and we concluded that it affirms that man does not live of bread alone, but

<sup>3</sup> Les thèmes bibliques majeures du discours sur le pain de vie, in: *Études johanniques* (Bruges, 1962), 47-129, 65-76.

<sup>4</sup> Messianic banquet: Is 25,6-8; 49,9-10; 65,13; 55,1-3; the banquet of Wisdom: Prov 9,1-6; Sir 24,19-22.

<sup>5</sup> Wisdom is identified with God's "word" (cf. Sir 24,3 and esp. Wisd 9,1f; also comp. Wisd 10,15-19 with 16,12.26). On the other hand, Wisdom is identified with the Torah (cf. Sir 24,8.23; Prov 8,22ff).

<sup>6</sup> See above, pp. 403ff.

of every "word" (commandment) which proceeds from God's mouth:<sup>7</sup> the true nourishment of man is the Law. Wisd 16,26 takes up the same thought once again. Material nourishment is incapable of sustaining man's life, it is rather the word of God which preserves those who believe in him.<sup>8</sup> We will return shortly upon these two texts and consider them in greater detail. Sir 24,21-23 is particularly outspoken in its identification of the Law as "food". Wisdom says: "Those who eat of me will still hunger" (v. 21) and then Wisdom is said to be the Law promulgated by Moses (v. 23). We may conclude that, already in the OT, the Law was designated as "food" or "bread".

Is there any indication that the Law was associated with the bread *from heaven*, the manna? Dt 8,2-3 interprets the gift of "manna" as a pedagogical means used by God to teach the Hebrews that man does not live of bread (alone), but also from the "word" (commandment) which proceeds from the mouth of God. The manna thereby becomes a sort of "symbol" for the Law. The symbolic meaning of the manna is further developed in Wisd 16,26, which refers back to the text of Dt. According to Ziener,<sup>9</sup> Wisd 16,26 accentuates the opposition between material nourishment and the word of God. Material nourishment is incapable of sustaining man's life, it is rather the word of God which preserves those who believe on him. Ziener claims that Wisd 16,26 offers a perfect parallel to Jn 6,27. In both cases we have a "sign" (the gift of manna (Wisd 16,20)—the multiplied loaves (Jn 6,1-13)) which is explained by a passage from the natural to the spiritual level (Wisd 16,26—Jn 6,27). The explanation itself is very similar: in both cases it is the "word" which ensures true life (Wisd 16,26; Jn 6,35.48.51) not material nourishment, be it the manna or the bread miraculously multiplied.

The interpretation of Ziener does not take into account that it is the manna which is used by God to show that "it is not the different kinds of fruit that nourish man" (Wisd 16,26). The opposition is between the fruits of the earth and the "word of God", not between the manna and the "word of God". The manna is not presented in Wisd 16 as a fruit of the earth, but as a singular manifestation

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<sup>7</sup> See what has been said about Jn 4,34. Regarding the "metaphor" of bread for the word of God, J. L. McKenzie writes: "I take it that metaphorical (*bildlich*) means the conscious use of metaphor to describe an object in terms of another object to which it is similar, but not identical. ... But I object to the reduction of characteristic Hebrew patterns of thought and speech to mere metaphor. ... When the Israelite said that man lived by the word which proceeded from the mouth of Yahweh ... he believed that life in its origin and continuance depended upon the word of Yahweh that life should exist and remain. For man, who can obey the word of Yahweh or resist, the word which gives him life is not a simple fiat, but a word which determines the manner in which he should live. The animals sustain their lives by food; man cannot sustain his by food alone, for to reject the word of Yahweh is death. This was not mere metaphor". *Art. cit.*, *TS* 21 (1960) 183-206, 206, n. 34.

<sup>8</sup> For Wisd, as for Jn, the life "wisdom" gives is everlasting life, of a higher order than "physical" life. That is why earthly nourishment is "*für belanglos erklärt*" (Ziener, *art. cit.*, *Bib* 39 (1958) 37-60, 408). Cf. further 38-49, on the analogies between the notion of "life" in Jn and in Wisd.

<sup>9</sup> *Art. cit.*, *Bib* 38 (1957) 396-418, 407-409.



of the power of God's word (v. 25). The manna is thereby a concrete manifestation of the power of God's word (the Law) to give life.

In both Dt 8,2-3 and Wisd 16,26 (in this last text in particular) the Law is *indirectly* seen as a "manna" of a superior nature<sup>10</sup>—the bread (food) which gives (true) life. The same association may be present in Neh 9,14-15.20. Neh 9,14f is particularly interesting because it may be the OT text quoted by Jn 6,31: ἀπὸν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκας αὐτοῖς. The gift of manna is mentioned immediately after the gift of the Law (9,14) and taken up again in v. 20, where it is mentioned together with the gift of the Spirit, "You gave them your good Spirit to instruct them and did not withhold your manna from their mouths".

To the evidence furnished by the OT one must add the numerous references to the Torah as "bread" which are found in Rabbinical literature.<sup>11</sup> These texts, it is true, are later than the Fourth Gospel, but, if they reflect traditions which go back to the NT period or earlier, we can affirm that the equivalence Torah—bread was current at the time in which the Fourth Gospel was written. If we are to believe Gen R 70,5, for instance, we are dealing with a tradition which goes back to R. Eliezer and R. Joshua (around 80 A.D.). At any rate, in the Rabbinic writings "bread" was often simply taken to mean the "Torah".<sup>12</sup> The expression "bread of life" is not attested in these writings, even though the Torah is called "Torah of life" or "tree of life".<sup>13</sup> Billerbeck believes it likely that the Torah was also referred to as "the bread of life".<sup>14</sup> The Torah was not called "manna" either, but Dt 8,2f (and Wisd 16,26 as dependent upon Dt 8) as we have seen, establishes a relationship between the manna and the "word" (Law) of God. On the other hand, the equivalence bread—Torah made it natural to think of the Torah as "the bread Moses gave" and it would therefore be most natural to take still another step and to speak of the Torah (the bread of Moses) as "manna". Philo equates "manna" with σοφία; which leads one to surmise that the equation manna—Torah was also made.<sup>15</sup>

Another important "background" factor in evaluating the bread-of-life theme in Jn 6 is the Jewish expectation according to which the Exodus events were

<sup>10</sup> The Torah is not explicitly called "manna", but the fact that the manna is associated with the "word" (Wisdom) = Law speaks in favour of an equivalence Law = manna of a superior nature.

<sup>11</sup> See the texts quoted by *Str.-Bill.*, II, 483; III, 302.

<sup>12</sup> *Str.-Bill.*, II, 483 c.

<sup>13</sup> *Str.-Bill.*, II, 482f. On the Torah as the source of salvation and life, cf. *Str.-Bill.*, III, 129ff; as the tree of life: II, 483 a.

<sup>14</sup> "... warum hätte man sie, die Tora des Lebens Sir 17,11; 45,5; 4 Esd 14,30, nicht auch 'Brot des Lebens' nennen sollen? Das musste um so näher liegen, da man unter 'Brot' schlechthin oftmals die Tora verstanden hat". *Str.-Bill.*, II, 482f. It is possible that "bread" was already a symbol of "life" when predicated of the Torah.

<sup>15</sup> "... the equation of manna with σοφία in Philo almost necessarily implies that in some circles it was taken as a symbol of Torah". Dodd, *Interpretation*, 336. The strength of Dodd's argumentation lies in the equivalence Law—Wisdom: Wisdom—manna, which we have just pointed out. On Law = Wisdom, cf. further *Str.-Bill.*, I, 213; II, 353.

seen as a "symbol and pledge of the expected deliverance of the future".<sup>16</sup> Because the second deliverance was to be comparable to the first, the promised Messiah was to be a "second Moses". Jn 6,14f;<sup>17</sup> 7,40.(52) refer to Jesus as *the* prophet. It is most likely that Jn had Moses in mind. Glasson believes that, for Jn, Dt 18 played less important a role than the idea that the second deliverer would repeat the Exodus exploits, and that both are woven together in the presentation of Jesus as the second Moses.<sup>18</sup>

The gift of manna was one of the salient events of the Exodus. As is to be expected, the Rabbinical writings speak of the renewal of this gift in the messianic days. What was later to become a fixed feature of Jewish eschatological expectation<sup>19</sup> may have been known to Jn. The Apocalypse of Baruch and a fragment of the Sybilline Oracles, which mention the gift of manna in the last days, make this quite possible.<sup>20</sup>

### B) *The meaning of the "bread of life" in Jn 6,35-58*

Before examining the section Jn 6,26-34, we wish to raise a preliminary question the answer to which will be of assistance to us in determining the meaning of these verses. The dialogue contained in vv. 26-34 is an introduction to the discourse which follows. This discourse has "the bread of life" as its theme. If it is possible to determine what Jn means by "the bread of life" in the discourse proper, the task of explaining the introduction (vv. 26-34) will be greatly facilitated.

The opinions of exegetes diverge on the question of the meaning to be given to "the bread of life" in vv. 35-58.<sup>21</sup> Five views may be distinguished: 1) The "bread of life" is the revelation (teaching) of Jesus in the whole discourse (vv. 35-58).<sup>22</sup> 2) The "bread of life" is the eucharistic bread in the whole discourse (vv. 35-58).<sup>23</sup> 3) The

<sup>16</sup> Glasson, *Moses*, 15. The author has shown that the messianic deliverance was conceived of as a new Exodus and the Messiah viewed as a "second Moses".

<sup>17</sup> At Jn 6,14f the "prophet" is explicitly identified with the Messiah. One of the two strands of tradition held that the Messiah would be a second Moses, the other that Moses would return as a forerunner of the Messiah. Cf. Glasson, *Moses*, 27ff.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>19</sup> *Str.-Bill.*, II, 481 (ad 6,31, 1); further R. Meyer, *TWNT* IV, art. *μάννα*, 466ff; Schlatter, ad 6,31.

<sup>20</sup> 2 Bar 29,8; Orac Sybil frag. 3,46-49 (ed. Geffcken) quoted by Dodd, *Interpretation*, 335. This idea seems to be behind Apoc 2,17.

<sup>21</sup> For a brief "status quaestionis" cf. X. Léon-Dufour, "Le mystère du pain de vie", *RSR* 46 (1958) 481-523, 483-489.

<sup>22</sup> Odeberg, Schlatter, Strathmann, and others.

<sup>23</sup> Loisy, Cullmann, Buzy, van den Bussche, and others.

"bread of life" is the revelation (teaching) of Jesus in the first part (vv. 35-50), the eucharistic bread in the second part (vv. 51-58) of the discourse.<sup>24</sup> 4) The "bread of life" is *both* the revelation (teaching) of Jesus *and* the eucharistic bread in the whole discourse.<sup>25</sup> 5) The "bread of life" is primarily the revelation (teaching) of Jesus, secondarily the Eucharist in the first part (vv. 35-50); it is only the eucharistic bread in the second part (vv. 51-58) of the discourse.<sup>26</sup>

As can be seen, one has the embarrassment of the choice. We do not wish to enter into a discussion concerning the merits and the demerits of the different opinions. It is sufficient, for our purpose, to note that the majority of exegetes hold that the "bread of life" signifies the teaching-revelation of Jesus in the first part of the discourse (vv. 35-50).<sup>27</sup> This interpretation seems more plausible to the writer, both in view of the background which was just sketched (bread as a symbol of the "word" of God, Wisdom, the Law) and in view of the explicit reference to the "teaching" in v. 45. It further explains the emphasis laid on faith (vv. 35-36.37.40.44.45.47), although the insistence on faith would also be "*à propos*" (but not quite so much) were we dealing with the Eucharist. Faith and the teaching of Jesus are correlative terms.

We will now consider the sections of chapter 6 where there is a contrast between the "bread of life" and the "manna", Jesus and Moses. In a broad sense, the Exodus imagery runs all through chapter 6, but we wish to limit ourselves to vv. 26-34 and 49-50.45.

#### a) *Jn 6,26-34*

The introductory nature of the dialogue <sup>28</sup> allows us to expect that the main themes of the ensuing discourse (35-50) will be laid bare.

<sup>24</sup> Lagrange, Bultmann, Mollat, E. Schweizer, and others.

<sup>25</sup> Léon-Dufour.

<sup>26</sup> Feuillet, Brown.

<sup>27</sup> Godet, Lagrange, Odeberg, Bultmann, Schlatter, Strathmann, etc.

<sup>28</sup> *Jn 6,25(26)-34* is considered a subsection by Feuillet (*art. cit.*, 48); Dodd (335); Brown (294); F. J. Leenhardt ("La structure du chapitre 6 de l'Évangile de Jean", *RHPR* 39 (1959) 1-13), who treats vv. 26-35 as a unit. Brown (with Léon-Dufour and Mollat) holds that the discourse begins with v. 35, vv. 25-34 being the setting of the discourse (294); Dodd and Leenhardt treat vv. 26-34(35) as part of the discourse even though they deal, in their view, with the "nature" of the bread from heaven. The verses are of special interest to us because they attempt to define the nature of the "bread from heaven" as contrasted with the "manna".

The theme of bread (food), last mentioned in v. 13, makes its reappearance in v. 26 and is central to vv. 26f (*ἄρτος ... βρωσὶς ... βρωσὶς*). It is conspicuously absent in vv. 28-30 and reappears once again in vv. 31ff (31 : *μάννα ... ἄρτος*; 32 : *ἄρτος ... ἄρτος*; 33 : *ἄρτος*; 34 : *ἄρτος*). The import of vv. 28f has been analyzed above. We mentioned that they dealt with faith as *the ἔργον* demanded (and "worked") by God as contrasted with the *ἔργα* of the Law. We have also mentioned that Bultmann considers vv. 28f a "fragment" which was inserted here because of the *ἐργάζεσθε* of v. 27.

At 6,27 Jesus makes clear to the Jews that they must "earn" the food he will give by "working" for it. The Jews, by their answer, show that they have understood, at least in part. This prompts Jesus, at v. 29, to clarify further. But the sequel, and v. 34 in particular, seems to show that the Jews have understood nothing at all. For this reason Bultmann holds that vv. 28f should be omitted. The difficulty is that, whereas at vv. 27-29 the "work" (belief) is seen as a condition for obtaining the food Jesus gives (and this is partially understood by the Jews), at vv. 30ff the Jews ask Jesus to give manna (bread) so that they may believe.

There is a certain incongruity, but it is sufficiently explained if Jn wished to develop consecutively the two terms contained in v. 27 : *ἐργάζεσθαι* and *βρωσὶς*. He explains the terms through the device of a double misunderstanding : 1) the "work", its nature; 2) the "bread" (food), its nature. Jesus speaks of giving an imperishable food; the condition for obtaining it is to "work" for it. The Jews misunderstand the nature of the "work". Jesus clarifies : it is "belief". The topic of belief is now taken up. The Jews ask for a sign similar to that of the manna, so that they may believe. Jesus speaks of a new manna (bread) which God (Jesus himself) gives. The Jews misunderstand the nature of the "bread". They believe he is going to comply with their wishes and give them some miraculous bread. This misunderstanding will give rise to the discourse which follows (35-58), in which the nature of the "bread" God (Jesus) gives will be clarified. If the "food" to be "acquired" (v. 27) is the revelation (teaching) of Jesus (something which is admitted by Bultmann), vv. 28f, which underline the role of faith, are perfectly in place. We therefore hold that they are an integral part of the introductory dialogue to the discourse on the bread of life.

We may now pass on to a closer examination of vv. 26-34 from the point of view which is of interest to us and seek to ascertain

whether the contrast between the "manna" and the "bread of life" involves a contrast between Jesus and Moses and/or between the teaching of Jesus and the "Torah". We may leave aside vv. 26-27 for the moment and begin immediately with vv. 30-34. It is here that Moses is mentioned and that the manna is compared with the "true bread from heaven" the Father gives.

Jesus had just demanded that the Jews believe on him whom God sent (v. 29). The Jews reply: "What sign do you do that we may see and believe you? What work do you do?" (v. 30). What the Jews are after does not become clear until they add: "Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness ..." The Jews are not thinking of a "sign" such as the one which Jesus had already given them (6,14.26), which they had seen (6,14) and misinterpreted (6,26); they demand a sign comparable to that "worked" by Moses. We are reminded of Jn 5,47. In considering the opposition made there between belief in Moses and belief in Jesus, we tried to show that the "signs" Moses wrought had been an indication that God had sent him. This thought seems to be present here too. The "signs" Moses wrought had confirmed his mission and had led his brethren to believe in him. If Jesus is the Prophet (6,14f), if he is the second Moses, let him work a "sign" comparable to those of Moses. One of the most celebrated of these was the gift of manna and this gift was expected to be renewed by the Messiah. Let Jesus give bread from heaven then, and they will believe in him as they did in Moses. The Jews recall the event to which they are referring by quoting a scriptural text: *ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς φαγεῖν*.<sup>29</sup> This text is going to be the basis of the "exegesis", based on Jewish homiletic technique, which will follow in vv. 32-34 and will give rise to the whole discourse on the bread of life (vv. 35-58).<sup>30</sup>

What was implied in vv. 30-31 without being explicitly stated is brought to the surface in v. 32. Moses is mentioned for the first time

<sup>29</sup> The source is uncertain. More probably it is Ps 78(77),24: *ἐβρεξεν αὐτοῖς μάννα φαγεῖν καὶ ἄρτον οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς*, but Neh 9,15 (*καὶ ἄρτον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς*) is not to be excluded by any means. Ex 16,15 also comes into question as a possible source. Jn may also have combined these. Cf. Barrett, *art. cit.*, *JTS* 48 (1947) 155-169.

<sup>30</sup> P. Borgen ("Observations on the Midrashic Character of John 6", *ZNW* 54 (1963) 232-240) has suggested that Jn, using Jewish homiletic technique, takes this scriptural text as the basis of the whole discourse which follows.

and Jesus claims: οὐ Μωϋσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ἀλλ' ὁ πατήρ μου δίδωσιν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὸν ἀληθινόν. The verse raises problems which are not easy to solve, but one thing is clear: Jn was thinking of Moses in vv. 30-31 and was having the Jews invite Jesus to prove he was the second Moses. So much is evident from the οὐ Μωϋσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν κ.τ.λ. But how is v. 32 to be interpreted? It can mean: 1) it was not Moses who gave you bread from heaven, but God;<sup>31</sup> 2) what Moses gave you was not bread from heaven (not truly bread from heaven);<sup>32</sup> 3) or it can mean both 1) and 2). Against the first interpretation one might object that the Jews, in affirming that Moses gave bread from heaven, certainly did not wish to deny that it came from God. Against the second one might object that Jn certainly did not wish to deny that the manna was bread from heaven. Neither of the two interpretations is entirely acceptable. The difficulty, consequently, cannot be avoided by saying that the statements are not mutually exclusive and were both intended by Jn.<sup>33</sup>

The only way out of the dilemma is not to opt for one or the other, nor to affirm that both are true, but to say that the two *oppositions* present in v. 32 must be taken *together* if they are to be true. John did not write:

- (A) οὐ Μωϋσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ἀλλ' ὁ πατήρ μου δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ

nor did he write:

- (B) ὁ ἄρτος ὃν (τὸ μάννα ὃ) δέδωκεν ὑμῖν Μωϋσῆς οὐκ ἦν ἄρτος ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. ὁ ἄρτος ὃν δίδωσιν ὑμῖν ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ ἄρτος ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (ὁ ἀληθινός) ἐστίν.

He wrote:

- (C) οὐ Μωϋσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ἀλλ' ὁ πατήρ μου δίδωσιν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὸν ἀληθινόν.

<sup>31</sup> Westcott, Loisy (444), Lightfoot, Bernard, Barrett. Bultmann speaks of the Father as the only giver of the heavenly bread but does not specify further (169).

<sup>32</sup> Bultmann (169), Loisy (444), Barrett, Westcott, Bernard, Lagrange.

<sup>33</sup> So Barrett, who prefers the first, but believes both may be implied. Westcott, Loisy, Bernard, hold that both are intended.

What would be affirmed in (A) would be : God, not Moses, gave you the bread from heaven ; what would be affirmed in (B) would be : the bread Moses gave you was not the bread from heaven, the bread from heaven is the bread the Father gives. What is affirmed in (C) is not the sum of what is affirmed in (A) and (B). The very difference in the tenses (*δέδωκεν* ... *δίδωσιν*), the use of the article with *ἄρτος* in v. 32, and the addition of *τὸν ἀληθινόν* should warn against such a conclusion.

The use of the article in v. 32 should not be overlooked. Jn did not write : *οὐ Μωϋσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κ.τ.λ.* (comp. *ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς φαγεῖν*), but : *οὐ Μωϋσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*. The emphasis is on the fact that Moses did not give *the* (true) bread from heaven—whatever may have been the case with the manna. Jn is not interested in entering upon a discussion about whether the manna was bread from heaven or not, whether it was given by God through Moses or not. This is simply taken for granted, presupposed as true. What Jn does wish to say is that the bread Moses gave (God gave through Moses) is not the *true* bread from heaven, is not *the* bread from heaven which the Father *gives*<sup>34</sup> and, therefore, that *the* bread the Father *gives is not given by Moses*.

The bread of God *ὁ ἄρτος* ... *ἐστιν ὁ καταβαίνων ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ζωὴν διδούς τῷ κόσμῳ*. V. 33 is pregnant with meaning. Although, strictly speaking, it could mean : "The bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world",<sup>35</sup> the

<sup>34</sup> Borgen (*art. cit.*, 233-235) believes that Jn is using an exegetical procedure which is typically Jewish. The text quoted (*ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς φαγεῖν*) is "rectified" in two respects : the *ἔδωκεν* becomes *δίδωσιν* and the subject (left undefined in the quotation) is to be understood to be the Father, not Moses. There is much to be said for the procedure Borgen sees at work here, but we would modify its application to Jn 6,31. What is being corrected in the first place is not *so much* the subject (which is not expressed in the scriptural text) as the term *ἄρτος*. Used without the article in the quotation, it becomes *ὁ ἄρτος ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ* in the "exegesis" of Jesus and, in the second member, *ὁ ἄρτος ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὁ ἀληθινός*. The second "rectification", correctly seen by Borgen, is the passage from (*δ*)*έδωκεν* to *δίδωσιν*. Jn would therefore be saying : "Do not read : He (Moses) *gave* you *bread* from heaven, but : He (God) *gives* you *the (true) bread* from heaven". The contrast Moses—God is no doubt present, but it is in function of the change of tense and, particularly, of the passage from "bread from heaven" to "*the* bread from heaven".

<sup>35</sup> Bernard, Westcott, Lagrange, W. Bauer, Odeberg (256f).

grammatical construction, which is voluntarily ambiguous,<sup>36</sup> and the terminology<sup>37</sup> imply that it is Jesus who is the bread come down from heaven: "The bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world".<sup>38</sup> The expressions *ὁ καταβαίνων* (*ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*) and *ζωὴν διδούς τῷ κόσμῳ* leave no room for doubt. In Jn Jesus is the one who comes down from heaven, he is the one who gives life to the world. Yet the reader recalls that Jesus' *διδαχὴ* is also *ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ* (*ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*) and that his "word" (teaching) also gives life to the world. When he further bears in mind that it is only in v. 35 that the identification of Jesus with the bread of life will become explicit, he is better able to understand v. 27 and the relationship which exists between this verse and vv. 32b.33.

At v. 27 Jesus says that the Son of Man will give the food (bread) which abides unto everlasting life. The "food" is thus presented as something distinct from the person of the giver. Vv. 28f, which speak of faith, lead to believe that Jesus is speaking of his "teaching", the revelation which he gives.<sup>39</sup> We have seen that this has every indication of being the true interpretation of the "bread of life" and that the

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<sup>36</sup> The *ὁ καταβαίνων* may be taken as an attribute (with adjectival force) of *ἄνθρωπος* or as a substantive which is the predicate of *ἔστιν*. In the latter case the bread is the one who descends, in the former the bread is that which comes down from heaven. In our opinion Jn voluntarily used an ambiguous expression and both senses are present. See, in the same sense, Brown, Schlatter, Lightfoot (159).

<sup>37</sup> *Ὁ καταβὰς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ* is used of Jesus at 3,13. *Καταβαίνειν ἐκ* (*ἀπὸ*) *τοῦ οὐρανοῦ* is again used of Jesus at 6,38.42; of the "bread" which is Jesus at 6,41.50.51. The expression is, however, also used of the bread at 6,58. One must bear in mind that the identification Jesus—bread has been made at 6,35. The expression *ζωὴν διδόναι* is only twice used of Jesus (10,28; 17,2), but the gift of life is immediately connected with the person of Jesus. "To give life to the world" is equivalent to "that the world be saved through him" (3,16; comp. v. 15 *ζωὴ αἰώνιος*), the mission assigned to Jesus by the Father.

<sup>38</sup> So Bultmann (163, n. 1), Loisy (444), Barrett.

<sup>39</sup> The opinion, held by many exegetes, that the fut. is necessarily a reference to the Eucharist, is hardly cogent. The audience has just been presented as unprepared and incapable of receiving the food Jesus gives, hence the "I will give you" (if you seek after it and believe; comp. 7,17: "If a man is willing to do his will, he will come to know ..."). Jn 4,14 ("The water I will give") also admonishes against interpreting the fut. of 6,27 as a necessary reference to the future gift of the Eucharist. Faith is considered anterior to the reception of the "teaching" (living water, bread of life). Hoskyns (292f) makes the interesting suggestion that "The evangelist ... retains the future tense ...—(contrast v. 32)—because the final gift of God is received and most clearly apprehended through the death of Jesus ..."



OT background favours this view. Once this is adopted as a working hypothesis, v. 27 presents no difficulty: Jesus gives the "food" of eternal life; his teaching or revelation is this food which, appropriated through faith, gives eternal life. The interpretation also makes vv. 32b.33 clear. The Father gives the true bread from heaven by sending his Son, on whom he has set his seal, to "speak" what he has heard with the Father—the teaching Jesus gives is the "teaching" which comes from God, the "revelation" of God to the world. Metaphorically: it is the "bread which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world". But what of the apparent contradiction between vv. 27 and 33b? Is it the Father who gives the "bread from heaven" or is it the Son who gives the "food" which lasts unto everlasting life? Both the Father and the Son give this "food" or "bread".<sup>40</sup> Their activity is inseparable—the words Jesus speaks are the words of God, the teaching he gives is the teaching of God. It is wrong to say that the Father gives the "bread" through Jesus (although this is true in a certain sense); he gives the "bread of life" and Jesus gives it, or better: the Father gives the bread of life insofar as Jesus gives it. With v. 33 we are moving towards the identification of the *person* of Jesus with the bread of life. This is not surprising, given the relationship we have seen to exist between Jesus and his "word" or revelation. By sending the Son the Father sends the "bread of life" from heaven.

Such an affirmation raises no difficulty. But if the bread of life is "the one who comes down from heaven", how can "the one who comes down from heaven" *give* the bread of life? The statements of vv. 27 and 33 seem to be at variance with each other. There is a slight difficulty, even though there is no contradiction, and Jn seems to have been aware of it to some extent. When he speaks of Jesus as the "bread come down from heaven" he says the "Father" gives this bread (v. 33), when he speaks of the "bread" (food) as something distinct from the person of Jesus, he says Jesus gives this food (v. 27). It is in fact awkward to have Jesus say he gives the bread he *is*. The expression, "the bread I give", is avoided after the identification with Jesus has been made—cf. vv. 34-51a. When it returns (v. 51b), the bread Jesus gives is his "flesh"—we are in a eucharistic context. Nevertheless one must say that Jesus *gives* the bread and *is* the

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<sup>40</sup> The "food" of v. 27 and the "bread" of v. 33 are obviously synonyms. In the OT and NT bread is the staple article of diet, *the* "food".

bread he gives. He gives the "bread" at v. 27; he "is" the bread he gives at vv. 33.35.

In the Wisdom literature "wisdom" is said to come down from heaven. Some authors believe that the Wisdom tradition exercised an influence on the apocalyptic "Son of man".<sup>41</sup> If such is the case, v. 27 already contains "in nuce" what is affirmed in v. 35, and the use of the title "Son of man" at v. 27 is not without relevance for an understanding of the problem at hand. The "Son of man" was associated with "personified Wisdom" and "came down from heaven". Jesus, as the Son of man, gives the food which he is (revelation) by coming down from heaven.<sup>42</sup> Vv. 27 and 33 would be complementary and emphasize the perfect unity of action which exists between Jesus and the Father in giving the bread of life. The bread of life is conceived of as "teaching", "revelation" *given*—as such it is given by Jesus (v. 27) (and by the Father—v. 33); it is conceived of as identical with Christ's person—as such it is given by the Father (v. 33) because he "sends" the Son (and by Jesus (v. 27) because he "comes").

It is only natural that the Jews, like the Samaritan woman, should misunderstand the affirmation of v. 33 and ask: κύριε, πάντοτε δὸς ἡμῖν τὸν ἄρτον τοῦτον. Jesus answers: ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς. The identification of Jesus with the bread of life is explicitly affirmed. The transition from the teaching (revelation) of Jesus, as something he gives, to the revelation (teaching) as identical with the person of Jesus raises no problem once one has grasped the identity which exists for Jn between the "revelation" (teaching) of Jesus and his person (cf. what has been said about 7,14ff).

#### b) Jn 6,49-50

Before passing on to the meaning of "manna" we wish to consider vv. 48-50, which also oppose the true bread from heaven and the manna on the basis of their power to give life. The verses are almost a repetition of vv. 32-35. V. 48 refers back to v. 35 (cf. also v. 33),

<sup>41</sup> A. Feuillet, "Le Fils de l'homme de Daniel et la tradition biblique", *RB* 60 (1953) 170-202; 321-346; esp. 321-341.

<sup>42</sup> It is noteworthy that the "Son of man" title is used by Jn 6 in close association with the "descent from heaven": υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου = 6,27.53.62; καταβαίνειν (ἀπὸ) ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ = 6,33.38.41.42.50.51.58—elsewhere only at 3,13.

v. 49 takes up v. 31 and v. 50 repeats v. 33. The verses which interest us particularly are vv. 49f :

v. 49 οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν ἔφαγον ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ τὸ μάννα καὶ ἀπέθανον  
v. 50 οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβαίνων ἵνα τις ἐξ  
αὐτοῦ φαγῇ καὶ μὴ ἀποθάνῃ.

They are very close to vv. 31 and 33 :

v. 31 οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν τὸ μάννα ἔφαγον ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ...  
v. 33 ὁ γὰρ ἄρτος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστιν ὁ καταβαίνων ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ  
καὶ ζῶν διδοὺς τῷ κοσμῷ.

In reply to the request of the Jews that he give them bread similar to the manna (v. 31), Jesus had answered by pointing to a bread more perfect than the manna, able to give eternal life to the world, and then had affirmed (allusively in v. 33, openly in v. 35) that he was this bread. In vv. 49f he again refers back to the request of the Jews and stresses the imperfect nature of the manna their fathers ate by pointing out that their fathers died, although they had eaten of this "bread". He who eats the bread which comes down from heaven in the person of Jesus will not die.

Apparently very simple, the contrast we have in vv. 49-50 is rather complex. The "Fathers" died physically, those who eat the bread of life will not die spiritually. The distinction physical—spiritual may not be perfectly Johannine, but one is at a loss for better terms. In v. 50b ἀποθνήσκειν does not have the meaning it has everywhere else in Jn (except at 11,26); it means "spiritual" death.<sup>43</sup> On the contrary, ἀποθνήσκειν in v. 49 certainly does not mean that the "Fathers" were a "massa perditionis", but that they died "physically".<sup>44</sup>

In v. 50a Jn illustrates the impotence of the manna to give life by pointing out that the "Fathers" died physically. But it is hardly likely that Jn wished to state that the bread of life preserves from physical death. It promises "life", freedom from death, but not in this sense (even if the idea of the resurrection on the last day is

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Mussner, *ZQH*, 61.

<sup>44</sup> It is a text such as this which vindicates Mussner against Blank (*Krisis*, 143ff, esp. 144, n. 83).

present). How is the contrast to be understood? We will return upon this when we consider the "manna" as "Torah".

c) *The meaning of the "manna"*

If what has been said so far is true and the "bread" from heaven the Father (Jesus) gives symbolizes Jesus' revelation (teaching) or the person of Jesus himself (as Revealer), we may ask whether the "manna" ("bread from heaven") Moses gave does not also have a symbolic meaning. It is hardly likely that the revelation of Jesus should be compared with the manna *unless* the manna stands for more than simple "bread" (miraculously provided). The manna and the true bread from heaven are either compared on the basis that both are "bread" (in which case the "true bread from heaven" is the eucharistic bread) or on the basis of their symbolic meaning (in which case the "manna", like the "true bread from heaven", is more than simply bread).

Since there are texts in the OT which associate the Law and the manna or which, more generally, view the "word of God" or "wisdom", conceived of in terms of the "Law", as "food"; since there are texts in which, more generally still, the "word of God" is presented as "food", it would be surprising if Jn, who is using the metaphor "bread from heaven" for the teaching of Jesus and comparing it with the manna, should not wish to give the "manna" (bread from heaven) any symbolic meaning whatever. When one adds that the representation of the Torah as "bread" is current in Rabbinical literature and that Philo identified the manna with wisdom, there is very strong reason to believe that the manna for Jn was more than simply "bread" (albeit from heaven) and that it represents the counterpart to the "teaching" of Jesus, i.e., it is the teaching of Moses—the revelation given in the Torah (the Torah itself).<sup>45</sup> We have already seen how Jn, at 5,39, denied that the OT had power to give life; at Jn 6,32f he denies that the manna is able to give life to the world. In both instances he asserts that "life" is to be found only in Jesus (his teaching). This parallelism also invites us to interpret "manna" (or: bread from heaven) as the teaching of Moses, the Torah.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> On Moses as "teacher", see the section on Jn 9,24-34 and the references given there.

<sup>46</sup> This is admitted as a possibility by Barrett (ad 6,32); Brown (ad 6,32) and Glasson

How can such a view be reconciled with 6,49? The Fathers ate the manna and died. Is Jn saying that the Law was unable to give life to the Fathers? It is evident that the salvation of those who lived under the Law before the coming of Christ is a problem which is completely foreign to Jn's horizon. Jn is speaking to (and about) his contemporaries: "The manna (Law) did not preserve your fathers from (physical) death, how can the Law (manna) give you (eternal) life? You must come to Christ to have life" (5,39f). The past and the present are fused into one so that the distinction between "physical" life—"eternal", "spiritual" life is forgotten in the process. The Fathers, who died physically, are contrasted directly(!) with those who "come" to Jesus and "live" spiritually.<sup>47</sup> Had Jn worked out the contrast more carefully he would have written something like this: "Your fathers ate manna and died physically—you wish to cling to the Law in the hope that it will give you life, but you will die (spiritually) just as your fathers died (physically) if you do not come to Jesus, who is the true bread of life". The real opposition is between the Jews who seek life in the Torah and Christians who find life in Christ; the reference to the Fathers and their death is an exemplification and does not offer a perfect parallel to the idea of "life" which is to be found in the "true" bread from heaven. Jn has omitted a step which, logically speaking, was demanded by the argumentation. There is a precedent for this in v. 32. The *δέδωκεν ὑμῖν* shows that Jn is thinking in terms of contemporary Judaism<sup>48</sup>—to *them* it is not Moses who gives the bread by which they can live, but the Father—it is not the Law which can give *them* life, but Jesus. If they refuse this gift they will die (spiritually) as their fathers died (physically). The statement, "Your Fathers ate the manna and died", can therefore not be used as an argument against considering the "manna" as a symbol for the Law.

The opposition at Jn 6,32f is between the teaching (revelation) God *gives* in and through Jesus and the teaching (revelation) he *gave* through Moses. Both are "bread from heaven". The teaching

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(*Moses*, 47). Barrett's terminology ("The Law given by Moses was not the true Law ... (the) ... true Law (is) ... the Son of man") is objectionable.

<sup>47</sup> As we have said, it is necessary to hold that *ἀποθνῆσκειν* has two different meanings in vv. 49 and 50; vs. Loisy (453f), who holds that they do not and therefore that Jn is affirming that the Israelites died both physically and spiritually.

<sup>48</sup> Bultmann, 169, n. 6.

of Moses was certainly "bread from heaven" (the manna was more than the material bread—that bread which Jesus multiplied and of which the Jews had eaten without perceiving its "significance"—6,26),<sup>49</sup> but it was not the *true* bread from heaven the Father gives and the characteristic of which is that it gives life to the world. Jn would not deny that the teaching of Moses was *of God*. If he binds it to Moses rather than to the Father, it is because this past teaching was, historically, bound to Moses. No doubt as a result of the controversy Church—Synagogue, "past" revelation is set under the sign of Moses,<sup>50</sup> the present teaching of God is bound to the Father (and to Jesus). Put in other terms: the "imperfect" revelation of the Father is that given through Moses; the perfect revelation of the Father is that given through Jesus; as a result, the revelation of God in Jesus may be considered the revelation of the Father "simpliciter". The present revelation is more closely identified with the Father than the earlier revelation given through Moses. We do not wish to imply that we have an opposition between Moses and God as givers of revelation.<sup>51</sup> Jn does not seem, as we have already said, to cast the least doubt upon the divine origin of Moses' teaching. He does wish to show that the only teaching which is "actual" and which is truly capable of giving life is that which the Father *now gives*—not through Moses, but through Jesus. The question as to whether the teaching which Moses gave was also of the Father is not raised at all here and, in the light of what Jn has said at 5,45-47, Jn would certainly not deny that it was. If there is an opposition, then, it is between the *teaching* Moses *gave* and the *teaching* the Father (Jesus) *gives*. May we also say that there is a contrast Moses—Jesus? Insofar as Jesus *is* the true bread, he is being contrasted with the revelation

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<sup>49</sup> For Jews the "manna" is "no mere food for the physical needs of man; the 'manna' was altogether a religious conception, imbued with spiritual meaning" (Odeberg, 255), a fact which speaks in favour of giving "manna" a symbolic meaning (i.e., the "teaching" of Moses, OT revelation).

<sup>50</sup> A comparison of Jn 1,17 with 7,19.23 is very instructive: *ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωϋσέως ἐδόθη* (1,17). The passive *ἐδόθη* indicates that God is the subject—the Law was given by God *through* Moses. Jn 7,19: *οὐ Μωϋσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὸν νόμον*; Jn 7,23: *ὁ νόμος Μωϋσέως*. Only Moses is mentioned in these two last texts. In other words: Moses is inseparable from the "giving of the Law", God is not (he gives it, but through Moses). In the mind of the evangelist the Law was more closely associated with the name of Moses than with God!

<sup>51</sup> Jn 1,17 excludes such an opposition. *God* gave the Law through Moses.

given through Moses; insofar as Jesus may be said to give the true bread (v. 27) and Moses may be said to have given bread from heaven which was not the "true bread from heaven the Father gives", there may be a contrast between Moses and Jesus. The whole Exodus typology which is behind Jn 6 and the definite allusions to Jesus as the second Moses make such a contrast more than likely. It amounts to the affirmation which we have in Jn 1,17: the Law was given through Moses, grace and truth came to be through Jesus Christ.

What is the nature of the contrast Moses—Jesus, teaching of Moses—teaching of Jesus? Is it one of opposition? From a certain point of view, yes. Jesus, not Moses, gives the true bread from heaven, the bread of life; the bread Jesus gives, not the bread Moses gave, is able to give life to the world. The New Covenant is superior to the Old, the Gospel superior to the Law. Jesus is greater than Moses, his revelation more perfect than that Moses gave (that given through Moses). However, there is no disparagement of Moses, he rather is presented as the "type", the forerunner of Christ. The manna he gave has become (in Jn 6) the "type" or figure of the bread Jesus gives. Moses and the OT lead to Jesus and the NT (Jn 5,46f).

### C) *Jn 6,45*

Jn 6,45, a text considered in detail in Part Two,<sup>52</sup> can cast further light on what the intention of Jn was when he contrasted the manna with the bread of life.

Vv. 44-47 do not seem to fit the context of the discourse on the bread of life unless one grasps that the διδασχὴ of Jesus is, like his person (from which it cannot be separated), the bread of life. The teaching of Jesus, the "bread of life", can be grasped as the fulfilment of the prophecy ἔσονται πάντες διδασκοὶ θεοῦ only by those who have heard from the Father and learned. We proposed to see in πᾶς ὁ ἀκούσας παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ μαθὼν a reference to the Torah. He who has understood the true meaning of the Torah comes to Jesus (accepts his teaching)—he who comes to Jesus (accepts his teaching) can be said to have thereby grasped the true meaning of the Torah. We also saw that in the last days the prophet-like-Moses was expected to repeat the wonders of Exodus. There would be a renewed gift of the manna. Furthermore the Messiah was expected to bring

<sup>52</sup> See Chapter Eight.

a new Law or, more probably, a new interpretation of the Law.

These lines of thought again indicate that a contrast is being made between the Torah (the manna) and the teaching of Jesus (the bread from heaven the Father gives). If the interpretation proposed above (and that of 6,45 in particular) is correct, Jn 6,45 further clarifies the relationship which exists between the bread from heaven God gave through Moses and the true bread from heaven he gives in Jesus. The final "teaching" of God in Jesus is to be related to the Law only insofar as Jesus (his teaching) is the perfect revelation of God and, in this sense, the fulfilment of the Law.<sup>53</sup> It is also in this sense that the Law was there only to prepare for Jesus and his teaching. The teaching of Jesus (the revelation of his person) is the teaching God promised for the last days. It surpasses in excellence the teaching (revelation) of the Law and brings it (as prophetic anticipation of Christ) to its perfection in a way which was completely new and unexpected. It is "post factum" that the Scriptures (Torah) are understood by the disciples!

### *Conclusion*

The manna (revelation of God given through Moses) and the bread of life (revelation of God given in Jesus) stand in the same relationship to each other as prophecy to its realization, promise to fulfilment. The central point of the contrast is the power to give life. The bread from heaven Moses gave is incapable of giving life; only the true bread from heaven the Father gives in Jesus can give eternal life.

The manna and the true bread from heaven do not, however, stand opposed to each other in other respects. The manna was an anticipation of the bread from heaven the Father would give in the last days; the teaching of Moses (the Torah), authentic although imperfect revelation of God and his salvific "word", was there to prepare one to accept the teaching of Jesus, the perfect revelation of God and his salvific Word. The Torah promised the life Jesus gives!

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<sup>53</sup> Rightly Loisy (452): "... la Loi n'a pu être qu'une révélation imparfaite ... Jésus propose à l'humanité la véritable et complète révélation". The connection was also seen by Hoskyns (ad 6,43-45): "The prophecies in Is 54,13 ... Jer 31,33.34 ... fulfilled by reference not to the Law but to the knowledge of the Son".



## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### THE "LIVING WATER" AND THE "LIGHT OF LIFE"

#### 1. THE "LIVING WATER"—JN 4,10-15

Once again we wish to consider our text only in view of the possible contrast between the teaching-revelation Jesus gives (if such is the meaning of the "living water") and the teaching-revelation of the Torah (if such is the meaning of the water of the well of Jacob, viz., of the well itself). As was the case when we considered Jn 6,26-34, more attention will be paid to the background from which the Johannine symbolism may originate than to a strict exegesis of the whole dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan woman.

#### A) *The background of the "gift of God" (4,10) and the "living water" (4,10-15) in the OT and in the Jewish tradition*

##### a) *The "gift" of God—δωρεὰ τοῦ θεοῦ*

Odeberg is of the opinion that δωρεὰ τοῦ θεοῦ is a technical term which stands for the gift of the Torah.<sup>1</sup> This may hold good for the Rabbinical writings, but not for the OT. For the OT the gift of God κατ' ἐξοχήν, which is expected in the age to come, is the gift of the Spirit.<sup>2</sup> In the prophetic writings the gift of the Spirit appears as "das zentrale Wunder des neuen Aeon".<sup>3</sup> Before the impotency of man to obey God's will and put his commands into practice, the prophets saw only one hope: that God in the coming age would himself transform the heart of man through the outpouring of the Spirit.<sup>4</sup>

It is worthy of notice that the gift of the Spirit is related to the doing of God's will<sup>5</sup> and to the Law.<sup>6</sup> Both Jer 31,31ff and Ez 35,25-27 see the gift of the Spirit as that which will make possible the observance of the precepts of God.<sup>7</sup> Both

<sup>1</sup> Odeberg, 150.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. E. Schweizer, *TWNT* VI, art. πνεῦμα, 368, 13ff; 382-384; 397, 1ff; Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 32ff. We may add that in Acts the gift (δωρεά) of God is always the Spirit. Cf. also Heb 6,14.

<sup>3</sup> Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 33.

<sup>4</sup> Is 32,15ff; 44,3; 11,9 (comp. 11,2); Ez 36,26ff; 11,19; 37,14; Jer 31,31ff; Zech 12,10; Joel 3,1ff (= 2,18ff).

<sup>5</sup> Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 33 and n. 66.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Eichrodt (*ibid.*, 37) who refers to Zech 1,6; 4,6; 7,12; Neh 9,20.30; Hag 2,5 (gloss).

<sup>7</sup> The relation is explicitly made in Ez 36,27 and 11,19f. Jer 31,33 speaks of the Law written in the hearts of men. The Spirit is not mentioned, but his activity is

texts were apparently so interpreted by Jub 1,23-25 and the former was so interpreted in the Rabbinic literature.<sup>8</sup> We should therefore avoid reading into Jer or Ez what we find in Paul (Rom 8). The eschatological gift *par excellence* in the OT is not the "Torah" but the Spirit, but the gift of the Spirit is itself related to the Law.<sup>9</sup>

Odeberg connects the *δωρεὰ τοῦ θεοῦ* of Jn 4,10 with the Rabbinical מתן תורה and holds, as we have said, that *δωρεὰ τοῦ θεοῦ* is a technical term for the gift of the Law. This may be exaggerated, but the texts Odeberg quotes<sup>10</sup> certainly substantiate that we may be dealing with a specific term developed to designate the giving of the Torah<sup>11</sup> and one cannot exclude that Jn is comparing the gift of the Father in Jesus with the gift of the Law. The possibility receives weighty support from the background which most likely accounts for the "living water" metaphor used by Jn.

#### b) *The "living water"*

The metaphorical use of "water" has antecedents in the OT, Rabbinism and Qumran. It is to these writings that we wish to turn our attention first.

##### *Water as a metaphor for the Spirit*

Water is found in the OT as a symbol of the Spirit. The gift of the Spirit, foreseen for the age to come, is described in terms which evoke the pouring out of water.<sup>12</sup> Some texts explicitly apply the metaphor "water" to the Spirit.<sup>13</sup> In Qumran the metaphorical use of "water" is not very common, but 1QS 4,21 explicitly refers to the "Spirit of truth" as "water".<sup>14</sup> In Rabbinical literature the metaphor becomes current as a designation for the Spirit.

##### *Water as a metaphor for wisdom, revelation, teaching and for the Law*

The use of "water" as a metaphor for "wisdom", "teaching" or "revelation" is frequent in the Wisdom literature of the OT.<sup>15</sup> Some of these texts are particularly

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certainly implied. Both texts were so interpreted by Jub 1,23-25, and Jer 31,31ff was so interpreted by the Rabbis (cf. *Str.-Bill.*, III, 704 and 89f).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *Str.-Bill.*, III, 704; 89f.

<sup>9</sup> With the gift of the Spirit Israel awaited the gift of a new Covenant, of a new (interpretation of the) Law. The thought is present in Jer 31,31ff; Ez 36,26ff and is especially obvious in Qumran, where it is the Spirit who gives the new, correct understanding of the "hidden things" contained in the Law (cf. Betz, *Offenbarung*, 119-142).

<sup>10</sup> Comm., 150ff.

<sup>11</sup> "The gift, or act of giving κατ' ἐξοχήν, is the Tora, or the divine promulgation of the Tora. For this the specific term מתן תורה, the giving of the Tora, is developed". Odeberg, 150.

<sup>12</sup> The parallelism in Is 44,3 (MT) shows the affinity: ...אצק מים על צמא—כי אצק רוח על ורעך. Cf. further Joel 3,1f; Is 32,15; Zech 12,10 (שפך צדק—ἐκχεῖν)—the LXX also translates with δίδόναι or ἐπιτιθέναι).

<sup>13</sup> Is 44,3; Ez 36,25f; Joel 3,1.

<sup>14</sup> *Str.-Bill.*, II, 434 b.

<sup>15</sup> Prov 13,14 (comp. 14,27); 18,4; 16,22; Sir 15,1-3; 24,21.30-33.

important because, owing to the identification of "wisdom" with the Torah, "water" also serves as a metaphor for the Law. Sir 15,1-3 and 24,21.23-29 are especially noteworthy. The first reads: "He who fears the Lord does this, he who takes hold of *the Law* finds her (wisdom) ... and she will feed him with the bread of understanding and will give him the water of knowledge to drink". The identification of the Law with "water" is implicit. In the second text it becomes explicit. Wisdom, which says: "He who eats of me will hunger still, he who drinks of me will still thirst" (24,21 cf. further vv. 25f.30f), is "the Law promulgated by Moses" (24,23). In this connection, Ps 1 (of the Wisdom current) should be mentioned. Of the righteous we read: "His delight is in *the Law* of the Lord, and on his *Law* he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by *streams of water* ..." (vv. 2f, comp. Jer 17,8). One may surmise that this image is behind 1QH 8,15-12.

The strongest attestation for the identification of "water" with "revelation", "teaching" or "knowledge", comes from the Qumran texts.<sup>16</sup> מִי is found as a metaphorical designation for knowledge, teaching or revelation.<sup>17</sup> 1QpH 11,1f compares revealed knowledge to the waters of the sea (a metaphor which is also found at 1QH 8,16f). The text of 1QH 10,15—11,1f is unfortunately corrupt. A comparison is perhaps being made between the water of revealed truth and false doctrine. At CD 1,14f the teaching of the "Man of lies", the opponent of the "Teacher of righteousness", is called מִי כֹזֵב.

In the metaphorical sense, מִי is frequently associated with two other terms: מְקוֹר and מַעַן, which are themselves metaphors for knowledge and teaching (revelation). God is the spring of knowledge (מְקוֹר דַּעַת—1QS 10,12; 11,3; comp. 1QH 18,12). He opens a spring (from heaven) (1QSb 1,3; 1QH 18,12). The spring (מְקוֹר) of living water (? מִים חַיִּים) is the teaching given by God in the Community (1QSb 1,5f). The heart of the Psalmist opens itself to the eternal spring—to the truth and the Covenant (1QH 10,31). God opens the spring for the thirsty (the members of the Sect) through an intermediary whose mouth becomes a spring of living water (מְבֹרַע מִים חַיִּים—1QH 8,16; comp. 2,18; 18,10ff). This living water of the eternal spring (1QH 8,7f) is "die echte Offenbarung", the eschatological teaching (1QH 8,16; comp. 1QpH 7,5-8), the revelation of the hidden things (CD 3,13.16). It is the water of life of the mysterious, eternal spring to which the trees of life extend their roots (1QH 8,6).

1QH 8,7 is particularly important because it testifies to the belief, within Jewish circles, in a *water of life*<sup>18</sup>—idea which is not to be found in the OT or Rabbinism.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> The following texts are of interest: מִי = 1QH 8,7.16; 1QpH 11,1; CD 3,16; 19,34; 1,15; מְקוֹר = 1QS 3,19; 10,12; 11,3; 1QH 2,18; 8,5.7.16; 10,31; 18,10.12; 1QSb 1,3.6; מַעַן = 1QS 3,19; 10,12; 1QH 5,26; 8,6.12; בְּאֵר = CD 3,16; 6,3f.9; 19,34. מְבֹרַע = 1QH 8,4.16.

<sup>17</sup> To the texts just quoted one may add 1QH 5,9, if the reading proposed by Betz (*Offenbarung*, 115) is accepted. He reads מִי הַבְּרִית (vs. מוֹה בְּרִית or מִי בְּאֵרֹת). The activity of the Teacher (the Teacher himself) would be compared with water of the Covenant. 1QSb 1,6 possibly also speaks of the living water.

<sup>18</sup> Maier (*op. cit.*, ad 1QH 8,7) comments: "Hier ist zweifellos ein wichtiger Beleg für auch innerjüdische Entstehung eines Lebenswasser-Motivs, wie es im Joh.-Ev. ...

The revelation or teaching symbolized by the "water of life" (the "spring") is nothing but the Law as interpreted by the Sect. Revelation and teaching in Qumran cannot be dissociated from the Law.<sup>20</sup> Teaching is but the communication of the esoteric truths contained in the Law and revealed by God to the members of the Sect (viz., to the "Teacher of righteousness"). Life and salvation are to be acquired only within the Community through the acceptance of the Torah as "revealed" to, explained and practiced by the Sect. The "water" is the "revelation of hidden things", the hidden things are the prescriptions of the Law (especially the cultic prescriptions) so dear to the Qumran community (cf. CD 3,13ff).

In the Rabbinical literature "water" is used to indicate the Law even more frequently than to indicate the Spirit.<sup>21</sup> Thanks to the Qumran texts it is possible to affirm that this usage certainly goes back to the NT period. The Rabbinical texts, which are very numerous,<sup>22</sup> thus acquire even greater value.

Before passing on to Jn 4 we wish to dwell upon a point which has merely been touched upon: *the "well" in Qumran as a symbol of the Law.*

Num 21,16ff speaks of "the well of which the Lord said to Moses, 'Gather the people together and I will give them water'. Then Israel sang this song: 'Spring up, O well! Sing to it! The well which the princes dug, which the nobles of the people delved with the sceptre and with their staves' ". If we follow this reading,<sup>23</sup> we have the rather singular idea of a well which "springs up" like a fountain. We are reminded of the Johannine: *πηγή ὕδατος ἀλλομένου*.<sup>24</sup>

Num 21,16ff is quoted by the Damascus document and receives an allegorical interpretation: "The well is the Law and those who dug it were the converts of Israel ... in the land of Damascus ... The 'stave' is the Interpreter of the Law ..." (CD 6,4ff). In CD 3,16f this well is also mentioned. It is a well "rich in water and he who despises it shall not live". The context shows how closely the Law is

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und bei den Mandäern bezeugt ist. Dass hier mehr als 'lebendiges Wasser' (Quellwasser) gemeint ist, zeigt der 'Born des Geheimnisses' (s.o.) und ferner Zl. 13 (heiliges Wasser). Vgl. auch 10,31 ..."

<sup>19</sup> The term *מֵי חַיִּים* occurs in the OT (Gen 26,19; Lev 14,5; Num 19,17; Jer 2,13; Zech 14,8) and in the Rabbinical writings (cf. *Str.-Bill.*, II, 433ff), but only as a designation for running water, as opposed to stagnant water.

<sup>20</sup> On this see Betz, *Offenbarung*, 36-59.

<sup>21</sup> "*מֵי* (wird) häufig allegorisch gedeutet, etlichemal auf den heiligen Geist, meist auf die Tora". *Str.-Bill.*, II, 433 (ad Jn 4,10).

<sup>22</sup> *Str.-Bill.*, II, 435 c.

<sup>23</sup> Reading *עלה* (with the Hebrew-Samaritan version of the Pentateuch) rather than "*עלי ב*" (with the LXX). *עלה* is the lesson adopted by the RSV (vs. the *Bib de Jér*) and has the support of the Rabbinical texts which mention this passage. Cf. Gen R 48 (30<sup>b</sup>), quoted by *Str.-Bill.*, II, 436, ad Jn 4,14, 2; Tos Sukka 3,11ff (196), quoted by *Str.-Bill.*, III, 406f; and Tanch B *וירא* § 5 (43<sup>b</sup>), quoted by *Str.-Bill.*, IV, 830, p.

<sup>24</sup> It has been observed that the idea of a well "springing up" like a fountain, which is conveyed by the *πηγή ὕδατος ἀλλομένου*, has no parallels. If Num 21,16ff is the source of the Johannine image, an interpretation such as that proposed by Bernard (ad loc.) is unnecessary.

related to the "revelation" of God to the Community (cf. vv. 14ff).<sup>25</sup> CD 19,34 again refers to the "well". Here it is called "well of living water".

It is interesting to note that the Torah is also called a "well" in the Rabbinical literature and that the term "well of living water" is used of the words of the Torah.<sup>26</sup> It is consequently not entirely correct to oppose the understanding of the "well" in Qumran to that which we find in Rabbinical literature.<sup>27</sup> Given this background it seems evident that a recourse to Gnostic texts is not only questionable,<sup>28</sup> but even unnecessary.

Before trying to determine the meaning of the "living water" and of "Jacob's well" in Jn, two points must be examined which will be of assistance to us in this task: the parallelism between chapters 4 and 6 and the *Sitz im Leben* of Jn 4,38.

#### B) *The parallelism between chapters 4 and 6*

The following points are of interest: both the gift of living water and of living bread are eschatological gifts given by Jesus. Jn 4,13f and 6,27.35 are very close: the water Jesus will give (δῶσω) quenches thirst forever, the bread he will give (δώσει) stills hunger forever; both give eternal life. The bread of life and the living water both have their counterparts: the manna and the water of Jacob's well. What is more: the manna was given by Moses to the Jews just as the well was given by Jacob to the Samaritans. The disclosures of Jesus to the Samaritan woman and to the Jews both lead to the same misunderstanding and to the same request: κύριε, δός μοι τοῦτο τὸ ὕδωρ (4,15); κύριε, ... δός ἡμῖν τὸν ἄρτον τοῦτον (6,34).

<sup>25</sup> For a detailed explanation of these passages, cf. Betz, *Offenbarung*, 23-35.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Gen R 64 (40<sup>d</sup>); Targ HL 4,15; Midr HL 4,15 (117\*), quoted by *Str.-Bill.*, II, 433f.

<sup>27</sup> Betz, *Offenbarung*, 29, n. 2.

<sup>28</sup> Bultmann (133ff) has Jn depend on ideas found in Mandaeen and Gnostic texts. Odeberg (who quotes these texts *in extenso*) is more prudent. He holds that "The symbolical use of the term 'water' in the said Gnostic writings is not to be derived from Jn. The influence behind this symbolical use is to the greater part that of the OT... Jn also, obviously, bases upon the current symbolism of 'water' and 'living water'" (167). He does not hold that Jn depends on the Gnostic writings. As for the quotations of Hippolyt (*Refut.* V, 19, 27, 9) they "are, in the last instance, derived from Jn 4" (*ibid.*). The texts quoted by Bultmann are probably all post-Johannine (Dodd, *Interpretation*, 312, n. 1). The Odes of Solomon (quoted by both Bultmann and Odeberg) belong to the Wisdom literature where, we have seen, the equivalence water—teaching, wisdom, is common.

It is true that Jesus not only gives the bread of life but *is* this bread, whereas he only gives the living water (he is not the living water). However, it is possible that the *δωρεὰ τοῦ θεοῦ* of 4,10 indicates the person of Jesus<sup>29</sup> and, if the "living water" stands for revelation, it is obvious that this revelation is inseparable from his person. A further analogy must be mentioned : in both chapters Jesus is referred to as the prophet-like-Moses, the Messiah.<sup>30</sup>

### C) *The Sitz im Leben*

Jn 4,38 is important because it may serve to clarify the perspective in which the whole chapter is to be interpreted (even if vv. 31-38 is a unit which was introduced into the pericope). Cullmann<sup>31</sup> has seen in the "others" a reference to the Hellenists of Act 8 (Philip, the evangelist and others who began the evangelization of Samaria and whose work was set forth by the apostles in the persons of Peter and John). The Samaritan mission is projected into the past—the apostolic experience into the ministry of Jesus. Robinson takes another view.<sup>32</sup> The "others" indicate John the Baptist and his disciples, who prepared the way of the apostles. According to both these authors the Christian mission to Samaria has coloured chapter 4. Whatever the meaning of the "others"<sup>33</sup> it may be assumed that Jn has the early missionary activity of the Church in Samaria in mind.<sup>34</sup> The conversion of the Samaritans is central to Jn 4 and has typological value.<sup>35</sup>

### D) *The meaning of the "living water" in Jn 4,10-15*

We have seen that the "bread of life" in chapter 6 signifies the

<sup>29</sup> Westcott, Bultmann (132). Brown (ad loc.) also mentions Osty and van den Bussche, but gives no reference.

<sup>30</sup> Jn 6,14f; 4,19.25.29.

<sup>31</sup> "Samaria and the Origins of the Christian Mission", in : *The Early Church* (London, 1956), 185-192.

<sup>32</sup> "The 'Others' of Jn 4,38", in : *Twelve New Testament Studies*, 61-66.

<sup>33</sup> Thüsing (*Erhöhung*, 54ff) holds that the 'others' refers to the Father and Son.

<sup>34</sup> E. D. Freed, basing himself on Meeks (*op. cit.*), has recently held that Jn was written partly to win over Samaritans ("Did John Write his Gospel Partly to Win Samaritan Converts?" *NovT* 12 (1970) 241-256). In our opinion, most of the arguments advanced by Freed to show possible Samaritan influence on Jn are ambivalent and could just as well point in the direction of Jewish influence, as he himself admits.

<sup>35</sup> This is held by Thüsing, *op. cit.*, 57ff.

revelation-teaching of Jesus; what is the meaning of the "living water"? Some exegetes hold that it symbolizes the Spirit,<sup>36</sup> others that it stands for the revelation or teaching of Jesus.<sup>37</sup> A third group believes that the two are not mutually exclusive and that both are intended.<sup>38</sup> We have seen how, in Judaism, "water" symbolizes both the Spirit and "teaching" (revelation, wisdom). A consideration of the Fourth Gospel itself yields good arguments in favour of both positions.<sup>39</sup> It is quite likely that the living water is at one and the same time a symbol for the revelation of Jesus and the Spirit. But which is primary? In our opinion Odeberg and Bultmann are right to this extent: that the primary meaning of the living water is the revelation of Jesus and not the Spirit. No doubt revelation and teaching in Jn are themselves inseparable from the activity of the Spirit, as they are in Qumran.<sup>40</sup> Jn 4,20ff unites the Spirit and the "truth" as the characteristic principles of eschatological worship. However, the Spirit is nowhere mentioned in 4,7-15 and the whole chapter takes on the aspect of a revelatory discourse (cf. vv. 10.12. 19.25f.29.42), of a "teaching" concerning the person of Jesus whose presence and "word" inaugurates a new, definitive era in man's relationship to God. In the Johannine perspective, the gift of the Spirit is itself seen in function of the revelation brought by Jesus. The mission of the Spirit is to lead to a fuller understanding of the revelation Jesus gives (is). One must further bear in mind that the Messiah (Taheb) expected by the Samaritans was to be a teacher—belief which is reflected in v. 25.<sup>41</sup>

The parallelism between the bread of life and the "living water" is a decisive argument in favour of interpreting "water" primarily as a symbol for the revelation of Jesus. The bread of life, which is the counterpart of the living water, cannot represent the Spirit.

But what of Jn 7,37-39, where the "living water" is explicitly interpreted as a symbol for the Spirit? Without entering upon a

<sup>36</sup> Loisy, Bernard, Barrett.

<sup>37</sup> Odeberg, Bultmann, Wikenhauser.

<sup>38</sup> F. J. McCool, "Living water in John", in: *The Bible in Current Catholic Thought* (New York, 1962), 226-233. He is followed by Brown. The thought is not new; it was already proposed by Westcott (ad Jn 4,14).

<sup>39</sup> A good summary is to be found in McCool, *art. cit.*

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Betz, *Offenbarung*, 119-142; esp. 135-140.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. J. Bowman, "Early Samaritan Eschatology", *JourJewStud* 8 (1955) 63-72; id., "Samaritan Studies", *BJRyL* 40 (1957-58) 298-329, 299; Meeks, *op. cit.*, 248-254.

discussion of what is a notorious "crux interpretum", one can hold, with a good number of exegetes,<sup>42</sup> that the source of living water is Jesus. During the Feast of the Tabernacles, the festival which anticipated the day of the Lord and the messianic age, during the performance of rites which symbolized the continuous daylight and the unfailing supply of water which would mark the new age, Jesus stands up and declares that the prophecies of the OT<sup>43</sup> and the event foreshadowed during the Exodus<sup>44</sup> are fulfilled: Jesus gives the water of life.

The "living water", in view of v. 39, seems to be a symbol for the Spirit. But a number of exegetes point to Wisdom passages as a possible source of the quotation and it is certainly possible to give the "living water" a sapiential interpretation. The invitation of Jesus, who stands up and cries out, recalls that of "Wisdom" in Prov 1,20 and that of Prov 8,2-3 in particular (where "Wisdom" *stands and cries aloud*). In Is 55,1 it is Yahweh who invites men to come to "Wisdom", with the words: "All you who are thirsty, come to the water". The teaching of the "wise" is compared to "a fountain of life, that man may avoid the snares of death" (Prov 13,14) and the "fountain of wisdom" is called a "flowing brook" (Prov 18,4). The Israelite of the "last days" becomes "a spring of water whose waters fail not" (Is 58,11). The doctrine of the "wise" comes out as a brook from the river, which becomes a river and then a sea (Sir 24,30-32).

We have seen that, in Qumran, the spring of flowing (living) water is opened through the "Teacher of righteousness" and that the water itself is the teaching-revelation of God, the correct interpretation of the Law, given in the Community through the Teacher and his "helpers".

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<sup>42</sup> Loisy, Lagrange, W. Bauer, Bultmann, Hoskyns, Dodd, Brown, Thüsing and others. For arguments in favour of this interpretation cf. Brown (320); Thüsing (*Erhöhung*, 162); Freed (*op. cit.*, 23-24).

<sup>43</sup> The OT texts proposed as possible sources for Jn 7,38 are legion (cf. Freed, *op. cit.*, 21-23). In view of the explicit reference to Zech 12,10 at Jn 19,37 and of the connection of 19,37 with the issue of water at Jn 19,34, which makes an allusion to Zech 13,1 almost certain (see what has been said above, pp. 350ff), Zech 13,1 seems to be the most plausible source for Jn 7,38. In this sense, see also Thüsing, *Erhöhung*, 162.

<sup>44</sup> A very strong case has been made for a reference to the events of the Exodus (the smitten rock at Horeb) by Glasson (*Moses*, 48-59) and it is quite possible that Jn 19,34 also contains a reference to this event (id., *ibid.*, 54-55).



Thus, both the Wisdom current and Qumran make it possible that the "living water" at Jn 7,37-38 is a symbol for revelation.

Those who refer to the Wisdom texts as supporting the interpretation that it is the believer and not Jesus who is the source of living water overlook the fact that they can be equally well, and perhaps better, applied to Jesus. That the teaching-revelation of Jesus is presented as living water flowing *ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας αὐτοῦ* presents no difficulty, especially in view of the Qumran texts, but also in view of the Wisdom texts mentioned above. In Ps 40(39),9 the Psalmist can speak of the Law being *ἐν μέσῳ τῆς κοιλίας μου*!

But how can such an interpretation be reconciled with v. 39, where the "living water" is identified with the Spirit? The identification of the living water with the teaching or revelation of Jesus is quite possible, notwithstanding the affirmation of v. 39. To begin with, v. 39 has a parenthetical character which allows one to raise the question as to whether it represents the primary meaning of vv. 37-38.<sup>45</sup> However that may be, we have seen that "water" is a symbol for both teaching (revelation) and the Spirit in Judaism. The overlapping of the two images in Jn is all the more natural because, for him, the role of the Spirit cannot be dissociated from the teaching-revelation of Jesus.

It should be noted that vv. 37-38 speak as if the gift of living water is given by the earthly Jesus and yet this gift, at v. 39, is the gift of the glorified Jesus. There is a telescoping of the two "phases" of Jesus' work.<sup>46</sup> The revelation Jesus gives during his earthly ministry becomes revelation in the full sense after his return to the Father, thanks to the activity of the Spirit, whose function it is to lead into the fulness of "truth" (i.e., who makes the revelation of Jesus appear for what it really is). In this sense the gift of the living water, the gift of life, is the teaching-revelation of the glorified Jesus: the teaching-revelation of the earthly Jesus seen in the light of the illumination which comes from the Spirit. We have here the same thought contained in Jn 19,34b.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Cf. Brown, 327-328.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Thüsing, *op. cit.*, 163-164.

<sup>47</sup> See above, pp. 358ff.

E) *The meaning of the water from Jacob's well in Jn 4,10-15*

The figure of Jacob occupies an important position in Jn 4,5-15 and the topographical indications are not without significance. Vv. 5f tell us that Jesus comes to Sychar (or Shechem) <sup>48</sup> "near the field that Jacob gave his son Joseph". "This was the site of Jacob's well" and the well and its water are central to the ensuing dialogue. Jacob appears again at v. 12. We have seen that the evangelization of Samaria is behind the interest Jn shows for the passage of Jesus through Samaria and his activity there. His missionary activity in Samaria is construed by Jn along the same lines as his mission to the Jews. Hence the prominence given to the figure of Jacob.

Just as the Jews at 8,53 ask, "Are you greater than our father Abraham?" so the Samaritan woman asks, "Are you greater than our father Jacob?" (4,12). Jacob was the spiritual ancestor of the Samaritans, just as Abraham was the spiritual ancestor of the Jews. The parallelism does not stop here. Just as Moses gave the Jews bread from heaven, so Jacob gave the Samaritans the well (6,31; 4,12).

The Jews say, "Our fathers ate manna", the Samaritan woman says, "Our fathers worshipped on this mountain". Only in one respect is the parallelism no longer perfect. It is not Abraham, the father of the Jews, who gave them the manna, but Moses; Jacob is at one and the same time the father of the Samaritans and the one who gave them the well. One would be tempted to conclude that, since Moses is not mentioned in Jn 4, the well has nothing to do with the Law (vs. the manna).<sup>49</sup> In our estimation this anomaly should not be pressed. It is clear that the religious practices and beliefs of the Samaritans are very much present in Jn 4,4-26 (explicitly in vv. 20ff). The point Jn wishes to make is precisely that their expectations concerning the prophet-like-Moses (Messiah) are fulfilled in Christ (vv. 19.25.29.42) and that their worship on Mount Gerizim, like that of the Temple (v. 22—the association is important!), is superseded by the new worship in Spirit and in truth (viz., by faith in Christ and the ensuing relationship to God). When one bears in mind that the Torah was the cornerstone of Samaritan religious belief, it is

<sup>48</sup> Sychar is probably a corruption of Sychem.

<sup>49</sup> "Joh. kämpft nicht explizit gegen die Tora oder gegen eine qumranisch verschärfte Tora ... Jakob, nicht Moses ist hier in Joh. 4 der herabgesetzte Ahn". H. Braun, *Qumran*, I, 115.

hardly possible that Jn would fail to refer to the Torah (even if one does not accept the allegorical interpretation of the five husbands!).<sup>50</sup> The references to the Messiah who "will announce (teach) all things to us" (v. 25) reminds the reader that the Samaritans believed that the expected Taheb was to be a teacher of the Law,<sup>51</sup> just as the Jews expected the Messiah to bring a new (interpretation of the) Law.

Our section is found in a general context which contrasts the old and the new order:<sup>52</sup> the wine which replaces the water of Jewish ceremonial observance; the cleansing of the Temple which indicates the abolition of religious observances centred around the Temple; the "new birth" which is demanded by the kingdom of God and the new "cult" which Christ inaugurates. When Jn has Jesus affirm that one will no longer worship on Mount Gerizim nor in Jerusalem and stress the need for "understanding" (ἐὶ ὕδατος) he cannot but be thinking of the "old" understanding (which is no understanding: v. 22) as no longer sufficient to approach God. For the Samaritans this "understanding" came from the Pentateuch. Again we must ask whether it is possible that Jn should have made no allusion to such an important feature of the Samaritan religion as the Torah (Pentateuch).

We have seen how, in Judaism, both the "water" and the "well" are used as symbols for the Law. If the water of life represents the revelation Jesus brings, we are entitled to ask whether the water of Jacob's well (viz., the well itself) does not also have a symbolic meaning. We may use the same argument advanced in the case of the comparison between the bread of life and the manna. We argued that the comparison demanded that not one but both terms be given a symbolic meaning (revelation in Jesus—Torah). Is the living water (which is an obvious metaphor) being compared with a "physical" reality (natural water) or is more implied? <sup>53</sup> Here too, in our opinion,

<sup>50</sup> An interpretation which goes back to Origen (*In Jo.* 13,8; *G.C.S.* 10, 232) saw in the five husbands an allegory for the five books of Moses, alone recognized as canonical by the Samaritans.

<sup>51</sup> See above, n. 41.

<sup>52</sup> Jn 2,1-4,42. Cf. Dodd, *Interpretation*, 297-317.

<sup>53</sup> The interpretation of Dodd and Bultmann, which holds that the contrast in Jn 4 is between the water "from above" and "natural, earthly water", the "apparent" and the "ultimately real" is unacceptable. Jn, in our view, is not contrasting two "orders" of being in the platonic sense. The earthly water and bread (the manna is hardly "earthly", since it comes from heaven!) are themselves symbols of a higher

the comparison invites us to interpret the (water of the) well of Jacob in a metaphorical, symbolic sense: it represents the Law. This view is not new. It was already proposed by Dodd<sup>54</sup> and others have added their voice to his after the discoveries of the Qumran texts.<sup>55</sup>

What is the purpose of the contrast? As in the case of the bread of life we must hold that, as far as the power to give life is concerned, Jn is opposing Christ's revelation to the Torah.<sup>56</sup> Only the water Jesus gives is a well (spring) springing up onto life eternal.

Is it possible to affirm that at Jn 7,37-38 the teaching-revelation of Jesus is also being contrasted with the teaching of the Law? To write that "Jesus' presentation of his revelation as living water may be by way of contrast with Jewish thought about the Law"<sup>57</sup> because the Law is mentioned at 7,19.49 and water is a symbol for the Law in Judaism is going a little too far, in our opinion. No contrast is made at 7,37-39 between the revelation of Jesus and the Law. The situation in Jn 4 is quite different. Here the water that Jesus gives is explicitly contrasted with (the water of) Jacob's well (which is quite probably a symbol for the Law).

However, if Jn 7,37-38 is considered in the light of what is affirmed elsewhere, not only in the light of the pertinent Jewish texts, but especially in the light of what is said elsewhere in the Gospel (in Jn 4 and 6 in particular), it is quite possible that such a contrast may be present, although not explicitly reflected upon.

The thought would be very similar to that of Jn 4,10-15: Jesus'

reality (though imperfect). Dodd (312) himself recognizes that, in Hellenism, water is hardly used as a symbol for "higher" realities.

<sup>54</sup> *Interpretation*, 312f. It is surprising that, notwithstanding the identification of the "water" of Jacob's well with the Torah—which he posits, Dodd should still insist on working with the platonic-Hellenistic categories of higher vs. lower, ultimately real vs. apparent.

<sup>55</sup> Notably F.-M. Braun, *art. cit.*, *RB* 62 (1955) 5-44, 24-26, who writes: "Mais s'il (le puits de Jacob) parut indiqué à Jésus et à Jean pour représenter le régime de la Loi par rapport à celui de la grâce et de la vérité (cf. 1,17), ne serait-ce pas que la Loi était figurée par l'image du puits?" (25). Cf. also J. Daniélou, *Qumran und der Ursprung des Christentums*, (Mainz, 1958), 145f. H. Braun (*Qumran*, I, 115) agrees that Jn "das Lebenswasser nicht mit der Tora (wie in CD), sondern mit den Gläubigen zusammenbringt".

<sup>56</sup> It would be false to want to restrict Jn's purpose to a polemic against Qumran (rightly H. Braun, *ibid.*). Braun's affirmation: "Joh kämpft nicht explizit gegen die Tora ..." will have to be qualified.

<sup>57</sup> Brown, 328.

revelation (and the gift of the Spirit) is life-giving and is seen as the fulfilment of what the Scriptures (Torah) promised but could not give (Jn 5,39.40).

## 2. THE "LIGHT OF LIFE"—JN 8,12

Before closing this section, a few words must be said about the possible contrast between Jesus and the Torah as "light". We have pointed out that this contrast may be present in the Fourth Gospel, but that the probability is very slight.

The uncertainty stems from the fact that, whereas the "living water" and the "bread of life" in the Fourth Gospel have counterparts (v.g., the (water of the) well of Jacob and the manna) in which one may find a symbolic reference to the Law, "light" has no such counterpart. It is therefore hazardous to infer that Jn is contrasting Jesus and the Torah when he speaks of him as the "light".<sup>58</sup> The uncertainty is increased by the impossibility of determining the origin of the Johannine symbol of light.<sup>59</sup> Were Jn dependent upon the OT or Judaism the possibility of such a contrast would be greater. The OT (the Wisdom current in particular) speaks of the Law as light.<sup>60</sup> The Rabbinical literature and the Apocrypha, where the representation of the Torah as light is frequent,<sup>61</sup> show that we are dealing with what became a well-established tradition. Yet the dualistic perspective of light vs. darkness as found in Jn is not that

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<sup>58</sup> An affirmation such as that of Dodd (*Interpretation*, 85), to the effect that "We can hardly doubt therefore that the evangelist is implicitly contrasting the real light of the world with the Torah, which claims also to be a light for the world", is open to criticism. Similar affirmations are to be found in some commentaries (Barrett, Hoskyns, etc.).

<sup>59</sup> Scholars are not in agreement concerning the "religionsgeschichtliche" origin of the dualism light-darkness. Dodd (*Interpretation*, 139f; 201f) has recourse to Hellenism (Philo and the Hermetica in particular). Bultmann (*Theologie*, 369f) has recourse to Gnosticism; F. Nötscher (*Zur theologischen Terminologie der Qumran-Texte* (Bonn, 1956), 92-103) suggests the OT; H. Preisker ("Jüdische Apokalyptik und hellenistischer Synkretismus im Johannes-Evangelium, dargestellt am Begriff 'Licht'", *ThLZ* 77 (1952) 673-678) refers to the Jewish Apocalyptic and Hellenistic syncretism; a number of authors (K. G. Kuhn and J. Daniélou, among others) have recourse to Qumran.

<sup>60</sup> Ps 119,105 (comp. Ps 19,9); Prov 6,23; Wisd 18,4; Sir 24,27 (comp. vv. 23.28ff); Bar 4,2.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. *Str.-Bill.*, II, 357; 521f.

of the OT or Rabbinism.<sup>62</sup> We must turn to the writings of unorthodox Judaism in order to find a dualistic perspective similar to that which we have in Jn.<sup>63</sup> Qumran offers close analogies.<sup>64</sup> If the Johannine opposition light-darkness reflects the dualism one finds in the writings of Qumran, it is not impossible that "light" in Jn is being transferred from the Law to Christ. In Qumran "light" is equivalent to "truth" and there is no "truth" outside of the Law. Those who accept the Law (in the interpretation given by the Sect) are children of the "light". It is acceptance of the Law which makes of one a "son of light" or a "son of darkness". In Jn it is belief in the light which is Christ that makes men children of the light (12,36).

Yet the dualism of Qumran offers notable differences when compared with that of Jn<sup>65</sup> and, on the other hand, writings, which do not belong to Judaism and in which "light" certainly has no association with the Law, also offer close analogies to Johannine usage.<sup>66</sup> In view of these two factors it is impossible to come to any certain conclusion regarding the possibility of a contrast between Jesus and the Torah as the light.

An endeavour to consider chapters 7 and 8, with their respective themes of "water" and "light", against the background of the Feast of the Tabernacles or, combined with chapter 6 and the theme of "bread", in the light of the "three gifts"<sup>67</sup> is of no assistance in solving the problem at hand. There is no evidence that the pillar (cloud) of fire was ever taken as a symbol for the Law. One author<sup>68</sup>

<sup>62</sup> H. Braun (*Qumran*, I, 123) rightly points out the difference which exists between the opposition light-darkness found in the Rabbinical literature and that found in Qumran and Jn. As for the OT, "light" (vs. "darkness") is a poetic symbol for God's salvation, for the good (vs. perdition, evil). We are not dealing with two opposed principles or "spheres".

<sup>63</sup> Cf. the articles of Nötscher and Preisker mentioned in n. 59.

<sup>64</sup> For the analogies, see esp. K. G. Kuhn ("Die Schriftrollen vom Toten Meer und ihre Bedeutung", *Universitas* 12 (1957) 121-130, esp. 129) and J. M. Charlesworth, "A Critical Comparison of the Dualism in 1QS III,13-IV,26 and the 'Dualism' Contained in the Fourth Gospel", *NTS* 15 (1968-69) 289-418, esp. 412ff.

<sup>65</sup> The differences have been pointed out by F.-M. Braun (*art. cit.*, 14f) and by H. Braun (*Qumran*, I, 98, 123). See also Charlesworth, *ibid.*, 409-412.

<sup>66</sup> The dualism found in the Gnostic writings differs in important respects from that of Jn (cf. J. Becker, *Heil Gottes*, 217ff and Mussner, *ZSH*, 36ff), but the analogies can hardly be denied.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Glasson, *Moses*, 60-64.

<sup>68</sup> T. F. Glasson, "Jn 1,9 and a Rabbinic Tradition", *ZNW* 49 (1958) 288-290. The article is based upon an observation made by R. Meyer.

has attempted to show that, in view of a Rabbinic tradition which held that in the pre-natal period men are instructed by the Torah, Jn 1,9 may be interpreted to mean that "not the Torah, but the Son of God illuminates every man as he comes into the world".<sup>69</sup> Such an interpretation, besides presupposing a reading of Jn 1,9 which is not certain, rests upon evidence which is far from convincing.<sup>70</sup>

In conclusion we may say that it is only in view of the contrast made elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel between Jesus and the Torah that one may be justified in postulating that Jn may have been thinking of the Torah when he presented Jesus as the "light".

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<sup>69</sup> Glasson, *ibid.*, 290.

<sup>70</sup> 1) Of the texts quoted, only one (4 Esd 7,21) is roughly contemporary with the Fourth Gospel; 2) not one of the texts quoted speaks explicitly of the Law as the light which enlightens every man who comes into the world; 3) the idea of pre-natal instruction is totally foreign to Jn 1,9 and Jn 9,2.





## PART FIVE

### SYSTEMATIC SUMMARY AND JN 1,17



During the course of this dissertation conclusions were drawn only when it seemed necessary for the sake of clarity. Now that all the Johannine texts relevant to our topic (with the exception of Jn 1,17) have been examined, we can cast a retrospective glance at what has been said, in an attempt to define more clearly certain points which could only be touched upon during the course of our investigation, to draw further conclusions, and to organize the conclusions into an organic whole.

Are the threads which run through the Gospel presentation of the Law (as we have understood it) woven into a consistent pattern? If so, is this pattern able to tell us something not only about Jn's view of the Law, but also about the "Sitz im Leben" which can best explain the Johannine view of the Law? These are the questions we wish to pursue further.

After this has been done, we will be in a better position to understand the last Johannine text relative to the Law : Jn 1,17.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

### SYSTEMATIC SUMMARY AND JN 1,17

#### I. SYSTEMATIC SUMMARY

It must have become apparent that the *Sitz im Leben* which, in our opinion, can best account for the place the Law occupies in the Fourth Gospel, and the manner in which it is presented, is the confrontation between the Church and the Synagogue and, more precisely, between the Jewish Church and the Synagogue which followed upon the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 A.D.

Behind this statement lies the commonly accepted assumption that the situation of the Christian community to which the tradition and author(s) of a Gospel belong plays a considerable role in shaping the perspective in which the work and teaching of Jesus are seen, influencing the choice of material and its presentation.

We therefore wish to begin our systematic summary by briefly sketching the nature and development of the controversy between Jesus and the Jews and that between his Jewish followers and the Synagogue.

#### A) *The conflict between Jesus and the Jews, the Church and the Synagogue, on the question of the Law and the person of Jesus*

There is a line of fundamental continuity between the beliefs and attitudes of Jesus and those of the early Church, between the reasons which led Jesus into conflict with the Jewish authorities of his day and those which led his followers into conflict with the Synagogue.

The two basic issues were the Law and the authority of Jesus. The two cannot be separated. The question of Jesus' attitude towards the Law (and towards the Sabbath in particular) cannot be divorced from the authority he vindicated for himself—from his person. It is the *ἐξουσία* of Jesus which was actually the point under discussion between Jesus and the Jewish authorities. Jesus did not deny the divine authority of the Law, but claimed that his authority was equally divine and that it stood above the authority of the Law. He dealt with the Law from this standpoint. It is therefore somewhat inexact to explain the strife between Jesus and the religious authorities of his day as a contention centred around the Law. The question of

the Law (its value, holiness, etc.) became acute only as a result of the authority Jesus claimed to possess.

The conflict just sketched did not cease with the death of Jesus; on the contrary, it acquired new intensity after the Master had left his disciples.

In the beginning, the Church was constituted by Jews who, notwithstanding their faith in Jesus, remained loyal to the practices and customs of Judaism and represented one of the many "synagogues" within Judaism. But it must soon have become apparent that faith in Jesus as the Christ had deeper implications than at first appeared. It is noteworthy that the hostility of the Jewish authorities which was at first directed against Hellenistic Jews (Stephen!)—the first to come under suspicion—was soon extended against that sector of the early Church which we would call "Judaic" (James!). Faith in Jesus, notwithstanding exterior conformity to the Law, represented a danger to Judaism!

The danger was twofold. There was, to begin with, the question of the Law. If this had been a sideissue (although a very important issue) during the lifetime of Jesus, it assumed greater importance after the resurrection. The question concerning the role and meaning to be attributed to the Law after the coming of Christ gradually became more acute.

"The problem was, whether the Messianic Age ... inaugurated by Jesus of Nazareth, could be brought into harmony with the institutions which were hitherto binding. The maintaining of both was a logical contradiction, as they virtually excluded each other: either the Messiah has come and *fulfilled* the Law, or the Law is still pointing towards him, in which case the Messiah has not yet come".<sup>1</sup>

Although the Law became an all-important issue in the confrontation between the followers of Jesus and official Judaism after the departure of Jesus, it was in direct connection with the question of the person of Jesus. Debate concerning the claims Jesus had made for himself and Christians made for him continued to play an important part in the confrontation between the Church and the Synagogue.

"The Jewish main argument against Christianity was ... that, by raising the

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<sup>1</sup> Jocz, *op. cit.*, 157; cf. further Schoeps, *op. cit.*, 153-167; Bultmann, *Theologie*, 109-123.

Messiah to a position almost equal to that of God, the purity of monotheism was impaired. Some of the Rabbinic references have clearly this objection in view; Trypho's contention against the Christian doctrine of the Messiah points in the same direction. The question concerning the plurality of the Godhead is a prominent feature in the rabbinic discussions with the Minim. Traces of it, it would appear, may already be found in the Mishnah".<sup>2</sup>

It is very possible that the attacks found in Rabbinical literature (Mek Ex 20,2 and S Dt 32,29) against the doctrine of the two powers have Jewish-Christians in mind.<sup>3</sup>

To have recourse to later Rabbinical texts in order to determine what took place quite some time before is, of course, always dangerous, but here we have the testimony of the NT which comes to our assistance. No matter how embryonic the christology of the NT may be on the point of Christ's divinity when compared with later development, there can be no doubt that the early Church bestowed divine attributes upon Jesus and raised him above all creatures.<sup>4</sup> Such an attitude towards the person of Jesus reaches far back and no doubt led to conflict with Judaism from the outset. This is eloquently borne out by the Fourth Gospel itself.

Before coming to St. John's Gospel, a few words must be said about the development which took place between the destruction of the Temple and the end of the first century.<sup>5</sup>

The fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. was a turning point for Judaism—and for Christianity as well. The Jewish people had been deprived of their religious centre, of their cult and of their national life. The liberty which reigned among Jews prior to the coming of Christ and during the first decades of the first century was no longer feasible. Weakened as it was socially and politically, Judaism felt the need of closing its ranks to defend itself from destruction. One must bear in mind that there is no distinction drawn in Judaism between the "religious" and "national". To preserve the unity of the "remnant", it was necessary to eliminate any source of division on the religious-doctrinal level.

The school founded by R. Johanan ben Zakkai at Jamnia shortly

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<sup>2</sup> Jocz, *op. cit.*, 185.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Moore, *Judaism*, I, 365f.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Cullmann, *Christology*, 270-314.

<sup>5</sup> For a thorough exposition of the following, we refer the reader to Moore, *Judaism*, I, 56-109 and to Jocz, *op. cit.*, 42-65; 146-190.

before the fall of Jerusalem was to become the centre for the reorganization of Judaism.<sup>6</sup> Here the doctors of the Law, under Johanan, formed themselves into a Council, the Great Bet Din, which was meant to act as a substitute for the Sanhedrin (or Council of Jerusalem). It was the work of the Bet Din at Jamnia which marked the rise of normative Judaism and which gave Judaism the arms it needed to defend itself against its enemies. Judaism became "monolithic".

Prior to the rise of the Pharisees under Alexandra, the Sadducees had constituted a strong group which opposed the Pharisees on many fundamental issues. The favouritism of Alexandra towards the Pharisees helped them acquire a position of dominance and leadership they were never to lose, but did not yet spell the doom of the Sadducean party. The situation changed after the fall of Jerusalem. Johanan ben Zakkai was a Pharisee who energetically opposed the Sadducees, and his disciples were likewise Pharisees. His Rabbinical council was purely Pharisaical. The consolidation of Judaism at Jabneh was the ultimate and definitive victory of the Pharisees over the Sadducees.

Judaism was so bent on inner unity that even the existence of two traditional schools within Pharisaism, which boasted of equal power, was considered a danger. The Council at Jamnia therefore settled the question in favour of Hillel (although Shammai's doctrine was also declared to be "of God").

Already before the year 70, Judaism, under the influence of the Pharisees, had moved decidedly towards what we would call a "religion of observance"—as distinguished from "cultic-ritual" piety. With the disappearance of the Temple and the cult, this tendency carried the day. The field was left completely to the piety of observance, "observance" being understood in the sense of strict fidelity to the precepts, as the Pharisees understood and followed them. Among these observances, one must be mentioned in particular: the Sabbath.

The Sabbath had always been a fundamental Jewish observance; indeed, for the Jews of the Exile and of the Diaspora, it was *the* fundamental Jewish observance. When the Jewish cult came to an end with the destruction of the holy city, the Sabbath alone of all

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<sup>6</sup> See what has been said above, pp. 241ff.

the sacred calendar remained and it became *the* Jewish observance, symbol of adhesion to the Covenant.

One last aspect of Pharisaical piety and its attitude towards the Law must be mentioned. D. Rössler<sup>7</sup> has shown that the view of the Law in Rabbinical Judaism, contrary to that found in the Jewish Apocalyptic, is that the Law is concretized in the multiplicity of the individual precepts. Consequently, the relationship of man (of the "just" and of the "sinner") to the Law is given in his relationship to the individual precept(s) of the Law. To despise one of the precepts is to despise the Law! One's attitude towards the whole Law is contained in one's attitude towards a single precept.<sup>8</sup>

When one considers the danger of extinction which threatened the Jews as a religious-national body after the fall of Jerusalem, it becomes apparent that the course of action taken at Jamnia (and the particular form "normative" Judaism assumed as a result of this) was exactly what was needed. It was a reaction against the dangers which threatened Judaism, the only means of self-preservation and self-defence.

The threat from without was great, but the threat from within was even more dangerous. This threat was represented by individuals who nominally belonged to the Jewish people and yet did not accept to conform to the basic tenets upon which what had become a religious-national body deprived of a territorially-bound national life staked its survival. Among these enemies, those most to be feared were the Jews who propagated a doctrine incompatible with that of Moses and yet considered themselves to be good Jews, indeed the true heirs of the promises made to Abraham—as opposed to their fellow-Jews, whom they accused of having been blind to that which God had wrought in their midst. The rise of normative Judaism coincided with the expansion and success of Jewish-Christians in their missionary activity among their fellow-Jews.

The destruction of Jerusalem was seen by Jewish-Christians as the punishment inflicted upon the Jewish people for having rejected the Messiah.<sup>9</sup> It no doubt played an important part in consolidating the conviction that: 1) the Jewish nation as such was no longer the

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<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, 15-20.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 19-20.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Schoeps, *op. cit.*, 153-160; Joez, *op. cit.*, 167-170; also above, pp. 118ff.



“chosen people”; 2) the Law of Moses was no longer binding for the new Israel.

1) The destruction of Jerusalem and of the Temple, the religious centre of Judaism, was ample proof, in the eyes of Christ's followers, that God had pronounced judgement upon those who once constituted his chosen people and that he henceforth reserved his promises for those who, unlike the majority of the nation, had accepted Jesus as the Messiah.

2) The destruction of the Temple meant the (at least temporary—but in the eyes of Christians: permanent) abrogation of that conspicuous part of the Law which we could call the “ceremonial-ritual Law”. God had himself thereby indicated that the Law was meant to be superseded in the messianic era which had dawned!

As simplistic as such arguments may seem to us, they apparently served to promote the Christian cause among the Jews, who became Christians in ever-increasing numbers.

Abrahams has shown that the measures taken against heretics by normative Judaism in the first century and up to the period in which the Church became “imperial” were directed against Hebrew Christianity.<sup>10</sup> This is demonstrated not only by the end and purpose of the Birkat ha-Minim (which we have discussed above), but also by the other measures taken by the Synagogue in its self-defence.<sup>11</sup>

#### B) *The historical conflict between the Church and the Synagogue— Jesus and the Jews, as reflected in Jn*

The pivotal points of the controversy between Jesus and the Jews in the Fourth Gospel reflect what we know about the controversy between Jesus and the Jews during his lifetime *and* the controversy between the Jewish Church and Judaism in the second half of the first century. We shall now retrace our steps, re-examine the main points of contention between Jesus and the Jews in Jn, bring out the distinctive features of the Johannine presentation as compared with that of the Synoptics, and ask how they can be accounted for.

##### a) *The Sabbath controversy and its implications*

Although the word *νόμος* is to be found neither in Jn 5 nor in

<sup>10</sup> Abrahams, *op. cit.*, II, 56ff.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Carroll, *art. cit.*; Jocz, *op. cit.*, 45-51.

Jn 9, the question of Jesus' relationship to the Law (viz., of the relationship of the Law to Jesus) is the central issue in these chapters.

In examining Jn 5,1-18,<sup>12</sup> we saw that the traditional healing narrative used by Jn was not connected with the Sabbath and that the evangelist established such a relationship precisely in order to introduce the controversy between Jesus and the Jews on the question of the Law. Prior to Jn 5, the theme of Jesus' persecution by the Jews had not truly made its appearance. Beginning with the Sabbath healing, the Jews are said to seek his death because he was in the habit of doing such things on the Sabbath, because he dissolved the Sabbath. It is the *Sabbath* work of Jesus which gives rise to the ensuing discourse, where Jesus claims the divine prerogatives of *ζωοποιήσις* and *κρίσις* (vv. 19-30) and has recourse to the "testimony" of the Jewish "Heilsgeschichte" (to the Sinai revelation and to the Scriptures (Torah) in particular) to justify his claims.<sup>13</sup> The Sabbath work of Jesus is seen as an indication that Jesus shares in the divine activity which does not cease on the Sabbath and which points to him as the Son of God.<sup>14</sup> The identity of Jesus, in turn, explains his relationship to the Sabbath and, ultimately, to the Law (see below).

The question was of such importance to Jn, that it is taken up once again in chapter 9. Again a traditional healing story, which was not connected with the Sabbath controversy, is exploited in this sense. The Sabbath work of Jesus becomes the focal point of a controversy with the Jews, exactly as in chapter 5, except that the controversy is developed more fully, with greater dramatic detail and along slightly different lines.

In considering Jn 9,<sup>15</sup> great attention was paid to the accusation of the Pharisees according to which Jesus was branded as a *ἀμαρτωλός*. An investigation of the term <sup>16</sup> and of its Hebrew equivalent (עש) showed that, on the lips of the Pharisees, the words *οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἀμαρτωλός ἐστιν* meant that Jesus was discredited in their eyes because of his attitude towards the Law, concretely manifested in his attitude towards the Sabbath. The Pharisees are convinced that Jesus is opposed to the Law and Moses because he

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<sup>12</sup> See above, pp. 9ff.

<sup>13</sup> See above, on Jn 5,31-40, pp. 209ff.

<sup>14</sup> See what has been said on Jn 5,17-18, pp. 54ff.

<sup>15</sup> See above, pp. 16ff.

<sup>16</sup> See above, pp. 30ff.

does not observe the (Sabbath) Law—they therefore cannot explain how he can do such “signs”. The disciple of Jesus, acting as a mouthpiece for Jn and the Christian community, insists that the “sign” itself, the fact that Jesus does such divine works *on the Sabbath*, shows that he is “of God” and that the accusation of the Pharisees cannot be justified. The “crux” of the matter (as in Jn 5) is the identity of Jesus—his being *παρὰ θεοῦ* in the strict Johannine sense (his being Son of God). This is the key to understanding the relationship of Jesus to the Sabbath and to the Law.

The point of view is slightly different from that adopted in Jn 5. There Jesus justifies his Sabbath work by referring directly to his unity with the Father; here his disciple justifies him by calling attention to the *σημεῖον* itself, which shows that Jesus is of divine origin (one with God) and therefore cannot be a “sinner”, opposed to the Law. Basically, both Sabbath controversies serve to raise and answer the question of Jesus’ relationship to the (Sabbath) Law.

To the Sabbath or to the Law? For the “Jews” with whom Jn (Jesus) is discussing and for Judaism in general, such a question introduces a distinction which has no reason to exist. For Judaism the Sabbath was *the* precept<sup>17</sup> and after the fall of Jerusalem the Sabbath observance, as we have said, acquired even greater importance than it previously had. Against this background, it is remarkable that the Sabbath precept should be the only precept<sup>18</sup> of the Law mentioned in the Fourth Gospel (except for a passing allusion to circumcision made in a debate concerning the Sabbath—Jn 7,21-23).

The Jews accuse Jesus of “dissolving”, “abrogating” the Sabbath (*ἔλυνεν τὸ σάββατον* Jn 5,18) and of not “keeping” the Sabbath (*τὸ σάββατον οὐ τηρεῖ* Jn 9,16). It is not certain that, *in the mind of the evangelist*, this is tantamount to affirming that Jesus abrogates the Law by not keeping the Sabbath (see below). Jn avoids speaking of Jesus abrogating or not keeping the Law—because *νόμος* for Jn has a double meaning (see below). What can be said with certitude is that *for the Pharisees* (and orthodox Jews) not to keep the Sabbath is not to keep the Law, to abolish the Sabbath is to abolish the Law.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Lohse, *TWNT* VII, 5ff; Moore, *Judaism*, II, 22-39.

<sup>18</sup> It should be noted that the Sabbath observance is a positive *prescription* or precept of the Law, explicitly stated in the Decalogue (“observe the Sabbath day ...”) whereas blasphemy is a transgression of the Law (cf. Lev 24,16) which does not even correspond to a *specific prohibition* of the Law (as opposed to swearing—cf. Dt 5,11).

Such an attitude is that which comes to light in Jn 9, where the attitude of Jesus to the Sabbath is of decisive importance to the Pharisees: Jesus is a despiser of the Torah (*ἀμαρτωλός*—עשׂר) because he does not keep the Sabbath.

That Jn should have singled out the Sabbath precept in chapters 5 and 9 as the bone of contention between Jesus and the Jews (the Jewish Church and the Synagogue—see below) is remarkable enough; more remarkable still is that the question of Jesus' relationship to the Law is made to rest on his relationship to this *one* precept of the Law. The Pharisaical view of the Law, as we have seen, is that one's attitude towards the individual precept of the Law determines one's attitude towards the Law as a whole. The Pharisees in Jn share this view. The attitude of Jesus towards the Sabbath represents his attitude towards the Law: he is a "sinner" (viz., scornful of the Law) because he does not keep the Sabbath. To distinguish the Sabbath question from the question of the Law means to overlook the fact that the two are indissolubly united.

#### b) *The controversy concerning the person of Jesus*

The Sabbath controversy is revealing in another respect: it gives rise to the issue which will then dominate the confrontation between Jesus and the Jews: the claim of Jesus to being the Son of God. We wrote "gives rise to" rather than "introduces". In our opinion, it is essential to understand that, just as the Sabbath question cannot and should not be separated from that of the Law, so too can the "christological" question in Jn be separated neither from that of the Sabbath nor from that of the Law.

Our exegesis of Jn 5,1-18 and Jn 9, it is hoped, brought out this connection. The Sabbath work (the apparent violation of the Sabbath) raises the question of and points to the identity of Jesus; the identity of Jesus explains his relationship to the (Sabbath) Law. In Jn 5 the Sabbath work of Jesus manifests his unity with the Father; his unity with the Father explains why he works on the Sabbath. In Jn 9 the Sabbath work of Jesus raises an insoluble dilemma for the Pharisees: as "miracle" it manifests him (in their eyes) as a "man of God", as Sabbath work it marks him as a "sinner". The solution is evident only to faith: the Sabbath healing is a *σημεῖον* which manifests that Jesus is "of God" (the Son of God); this in turn, explains and justifies his Sabbath work.

It is therefore inexact to say that the (apparent) violation of the Sabbath (of the Law) in Jn 5 and Jn 9 merely serves to bring "die Handlung in Gang" (Bultmann)<sup>19</sup> or that, in these same chapters, "wo ausdrücklich das Beiseitesetzen des Gesetzes durch Jesus erzählt wird ... ist das interessierende Thema nicht eigentlich die Geltung des Gesetzes, sondern diese Fälle und diese Fragen bilden nur den Anlass und Ausgangspunkt für die Entwicklung des jeweiligen eigentlichen Themas" (Gutbrod).<sup>20</sup> The "Handlung" which is set in motion and the "eigentliche Thema" which is introduced are concerned with the person of Jesus *in his relationship to the Law*. In the setting of the controversy of Jesus with the Jews, the "christological" question is itself bound to the question of Jesus' relationship to the Law (viz., of the relationship of the Law to Jesus). The moot point is christological, but the christological question cannot be divorced from that of the "Geltung des Gesetzes" for Jesus (and for his followers), so that the "eigentliche Thema" is *also* that of the Law, its nature and value in view of the Christ-event.

To what an extent the "christological" question in Jn is fused with that of the Law is borne out by the reaction of the Jews to the self-revelation of Jesus. Jesus' claim to divinity, already behind the whole question of the Sabbath, is the basis of all the accusations made against Jesus by the Jews *in the name of the Law*: that of blasphemy, of leading the people astray by his teaching and of endangering the survival of the Jewish nation. Jn can consequently sum up the "case" the Jews have against Jesus by having them cry out: "We have a Law and according to the Law he must die because he made himself Son of God" (19,7).

We insisted<sup>21</sup> that the three "charges" made against Jesus are all immediately related to the claim Jesus makes of being the Son of God. The relation of the three charges has been brought out: Jesus says, "I am the Son of God"—in the eyes of the Jews this is blasphemy; Jesus teaches (reveals) that he is the Son of God—this is false teaching; Jesus works many signs and will possibly lead all (Jews) to believe on him as the Son of God—this is a threat to the survival of Judaism.

Behind all three charges stands the Law. In the eyes of traditional

<sup>19</sup> "Hirsch's Auslegung des Johannes-Evangeliums", *EvTheol* 4 (1937) 115-142, 128.

<sup>20</sup> *TWNT* IV, 1075, 35ff.

<sup>21</sup> See above, *passim*, but esp. pp. 7f; 118ff.

Judaism Jesus is undermining the very corner-stone of Judaism : monotheism. The fundamental belief of the religious tradition which goes back to Moses is that there is no other God besides יהוה, the one and only God; the prayer of the Synagogue was preceded by the recitation of the Jewish "creed", the Shema : "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One ..."

aa) *Blasphemy* <sup>22</sup>

By claiming equality with God, Jesus becomes guilty, in the eyes of the Jews, of a transgression against the Law (blasphemy), because the Law demands the death of any man who makes himself in some way equal to God.

Because the christology of Jn is much more developed than that of the Synoptics, the charge of blasphemy made by the Jews against Jesus in the Fourth Gospel has a much firmer foundation.

At 5,17 Jesus attributes to himself the divine prerogative of *ζωοποιῆσις* (cf. vv. 19-30); he calls God his Father and makes himself equal to God. Jn 8,58 brings what is affirmed in Jn 7-8 to a head. In these chapters Jesus has made clear that God is his Father (in a unique and exclusive sense) and that he is the Son of God, equal to God. The mystery of his identity is summed up in the use of the absolute *ἐγὼ εἰμι* formula, which closes the section. Jesus attributes to himself the unique mode of existence of God himself; he is (apparently) usurping the divine name, with all it implies. With Jn 10,22-38, where Jesus refers to his divine Sonship with unprecedented clarity, the accusation of blasphemy (already expressed by the reaction of the Jews at 5,18 and 8,59) becomes explicit. The text is particularly important because it is quite probably the Johannine equivalent of the trial before Caiaphas, projected back into the period of Jesus' public ministry by Jn. Jn 10,22-38, the last great confrontation between Jesus and the Jews, is meant to tell us why Jesus was condemned and put to death.

bb) *Πλάνη* <sup>23</sup>

If the intention of the Jews to kill Jesus is connected with his blasphemous claims (and the Jewish respect for the Law) at 5,18;

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<sup>22</sup> See pp. 53ff.

<sup>23</sup> See pp. 81ff.

8,59 and 10,31, the reason why the Pharisees send to arrest Jesus at 7,32 and the repeated references to the attempts to seize or kill Jesus in Jn 7-8 are connected with his teaching. The issue is basically the same. The teaching of Jesus is his self-revelation and he reveals himself as the Son of God. This is the "doctrine" which appears pernicious and deleterious to the Pharisees and leaders of the Jews. Jesus does not follow the teaching of any Rabbinical "school" and does not attempt to base the authority of his teaching on that of Moses. Jesus presents himself as someone sent by God in an eminent and unique manner: he has come from God as the one who was with him from the beginning as the only Son. He claims the words he speaks are divine revelation which he received directly from his Father; he teaches that God reveals himself in his person and in his person alone.

Such teaching, in the eyes of the Jews, cannot be reconciled with the teaching of Moses. Jesus is a *πλάνος*, who leads away from orthodoxy. He must therefore be eliminated.

cc) *Subversion* <sup>24</sup>

Jesus is an enemy of the Jewish nation for the same reason for which he is a *πλάνος*, except that this last charge implies that Jesus' teaching is meeting with success. He is performing many "signs" and thereby leading all to believe on him—to accept him as the Son of God he claims to be. There is danger of general apostasy, which cannot but mean the end of the Jewish nation which, by definition, is a religious community gathered around the Law. Caiaphas therefore counsels his colleagues to remove Jesus as a threat to the Temple (*τόπος*) and to the nation (*ἔθνος*)—Jn 11,47-52.

The three accusations are summed up in the words the Jews utter before Pilate: "We have a Law and according to the Law he must die because he made himself Son of God" (Jn 19,7). The text is invariably taken as a reference to the charge of blasphemy.<sup>25</sup> We tried to show <sup>26</sup> that it must be given a broader scope.<sup>27</sup> It no doubt

<sup>24</sup> See pp. 117ff.

<sup>25</sup> So Loisy, Lagrange, Bultmann, Bernard, Westcott, Lightfoot, Strathmann, Barrett, Brown, Hoskyns, W. Bauer, Th. Zahn.

<sup>26</sup> On what follows, see esp. pp. 7f; 112ff; 118ff and Chapter Ten, esp. 315ff.

<sup>27</sup> Both Dodd ("The Historical Problem of the Death of Jesus", in: *More New Testament Studies* (Manchester, 1968), 84-101) and D. W. Wead ("We Have a Law",

refers primarily to the charge of blasphemy, yet Jesus' claim to divine Sonship is not behind the charge of blasphemy alone, but behind that of false teaching and of subversion as well. Jn 19,7 is a direct reference to the accusation of blasphemy and to 10,22-38 in particular. On the other hand, it is the charge of false teaching which leads the Pharisees to pronounce a condemnatory judgement upon Jesus in the session recorded at Jn 7,45-51<sup>28</sup> (see also Jn 7,14-18 and Jn 7,19; comp. Jn 9,24-34; 18,19-24)<sup>29</sup> and at Jn 11,47-52,<sup>30</sup> where the death of Jesus is decreed (in what seems to be an official gathering of the Sanhedrin) because of his "subversive" activity, because his "signs" are leading men to accept his teaching and to believe on him. We discerned the Law (in the Jewish interpretation given to it) as the moving force behind the "judgement" of the Pharisees at Jn 7,45-51 and behind the decision of the Council at Jn 11,47ff.

Jn 19,7 shows the real motivation behind the murderous intention of the Jews. We disagreed with the statement of Dodd, according to which the importance of the claim to being the Son of God is reduced rather than enhanced in the Johannine account of the trial before Pilate, and endeavoured to show that Jn's whole presentation of the trial seeks to illustrate that the claim to divine Sonship is the true and only factor which prompts the Jews to demand the death of Jesus.

C) *History and interpretation in the Johannine presentation  
of the antagonism of the Jews towards Jesus*

Is the Johannine presentation of the motives behind the hostility of the Jews towards Jesus faithful to historical fact? We believe this is the case and that the "Sitz im Leben Jesu" and the "Sitz im Leben of the Johannine community" are the two factors which explain the Johannine presentation *and* its faithfulness to history.

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*NovT* 11 (1969) 185-189 rightly give Jn 19,7 a broader scope. However, one should not say that Jesus was convicted on the two counts of being a blasphemer and a false prophet (vs. Wead, *ibid.*, 189). We refer the reader also to Meeks, *op. cit.*, 55-81 (who, unfortunately, does not bring out the importance of 19,7).

<sup>28</sup> On Jn 7,45-51, see pp. 101ff; 138ff.

<sup>29</sup> Jn 7,14-18; 9,24-34; 18,19-24 have been dealt with on pp. 87-116; Jn 7,19 has been considered on pp. 130ff.

<sup>30</sup> On Jn 11,47-52, see pp. 117ff; 299ff.



The Johannine presentation of the opposition of the Jews to Jesus (and to his followers) and the reasons behind it is very much in keeping with the recorded facts of history. There is no denying that the Synoptics also move along the same lines. The Sabbath question, the authority of Jesus over against that of the Law, the person of Jesus, these are themes which are found both in Jn and the Synoptics. Yet, it is striking that Jn should give us a picture which is much better focused. The two issues—the Law and the person of Jesus—are more developed and the confrontation much more clearly delineated.

Jesus' attitude towards the Sabbath is immediately related to his attitude towards the Law and defined *exclusively* in terms of his *ἐξουσία*; the *ἐξουσία*, in turn, is that which he possesses as the Son of God. Correlatively, the opposition of the Jews is firmly based upon their Law—they condemn Jesus because of his Sabbath work and, more fundamentally, because of his claims to divine Sonship which stand behind his attitude towards the Law. All the issues: the Sabbath violations, blasphemy, false teaching, going against the interest of the nation, are traced back to the one great issue: Jesus opposes the Torah, in the meaning and value given to it by traditional Judaism. We may be allowed to illustrate this more fully, at the cost of some repetition.

In the Synoptics the Sabbath work of Jesus raises the question of his *ἐξουσία*, but there are a number of arguments adduced to justify such behaviour (the example of David, that the Sabbath was made for man not man for the Sabbath, the "humanitarian" motive). Jn gives only one reason: Jesus shares in the divine activity—as Son of God he brings the Sabbath to its fulfilment (cf. exegesis of Jn 7,21-23).<sup>31</sup> There is nothing equal to this in the Synoptics. Mk 2,28, Par is the closest we ever come to the Johannine point of view, but it still falls short of the Johannine formulation. It is one thing to affirm that the Messiah is Lord over the Sabbath and another to affirm that the Messiah is the Son of God, who acts in perfect unity with the Father and hence must work on the Sabbath even as God does! It must further be noted that Mk 2,28 is, quite certainly, a Christian comment<sup>32</sup> which expresses the faith of the Church in the Lordship of Jesus over all that belongs to man, including the Sabbath.

<sup>31</sup> See above, pp. 158ff.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Taylor, *op. cit.*, 220.

The claim Jesus makes for his person is capsulized by the Synoptics : Jesus is condemned to death because of the blasphemy proffered before Caiaphas and the Council. His condemnation is presented as the result of an "act" of blasphemy and, although the "act" is itself representative,<sup>33</sup> the reader is not told explicitly that, during his whole ministry, Jesus had provoked the enmity of the Jewish leaders because of the claims he made for his person. The solemn affirmation Jesus makes before the Council therefore remains somewhat inarticulate—just how he could have been condemned for such an affirmation remains problematic.

Jn also mentions the charge of blasphemy and, indeed, singles it out as the crucial charge made against Jesus by the Jews. But the charge is given a much better foundation. Jesus affirms that he stands in an absolutely unique relationship to God repeatedly and throughout the whole period of his ministry in terms which are far from ambiguous ! Jn is furthermore careful to show that it is Jesus' whole teaching activity, in which his claim to divine Sonship constantly shines forth, which is considered a blasphemous attack upon the sanctity and authority of God and his Law. When the Jews declare that he must die because he made himself Son of God, there is no doubt in the reader's mind about what is truly at stake. It likewise is clear that the motivation behind the action of the Jews is to remove a person who constitutes a threat to the Law and therefore to the Jewish nation (see Part Three).

In a recent publication of a hitherto unpublished lecture,<sup>34</sup> Dodd has examined the historical problem of the death of Jesus and has concluded that the "blasphemy" for which Jesus is condemned is not to be identified with "any definable statutory offence" (v.g., with an individual blasphemous utterance) :

"Jesus was charged with blasphemy because he spoke and acted in ways which implied that he stood in a special relation with God, so that his words carried divine authority and his actions were instinct with divine power. Unless this could be believed, the implied claim was an affront to the deepest religious sentiments of his people, a profanation of sanctities; and this, I suggest, is what the charge of 'blasphemy' really stands for ..." <sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Cf. Brown, *art. cit.*, *CBQ* 23 (1961) 143-160.

<sup>34</sup> *Art. cit.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

Dodd writes that this view is common to Jn and the Synoptics alike. This may be true, but it is only thanks to Jn that the Synoptic accusation of blasphemy appears in its true light. When one reads the article of Dodd one comes away with the impression that Jn is, after all, the one who is closest to historical fact. It is he who presents the issues at stake (the religious question, the political issue and the relationship between the two) in the clearest light. And one wonders why Dodd affords no explanation for what, to say the least, is a surprising anomaly. Jn, whose whole presentation of Jesus and of his life reflects a later date and a greater freedom with regard to history, is more explicit about the historical facts which led to Christ's death!

We suggest that such a phenomenon can be accounted for only if certain difficulties in which the Johannine community found itself induced Jn to present the historical factors which prompted the Pharisees to take action against Jesus in a sharper light. But not just *any* historical situation could have accomplished this—it had to be a historical situation which was greatly similar to that with which Jesus himself was confronted, and this at a time in which the confrontation had become more pronounced and the issues at stake more obvious.

The confrontation between Jesus and the Jews is so well delineated because the Johannine community is also confronted with the same adversaries, whose opposition and antagonism is based upon the same reasons which led them to oppose and antagonize Jesus—except that the battle has become more heated and the arms used more sophisticated. We are referring to the confrontation between the Jewish Church and the Synagogue after the fall of Jerusalem.

What has been said so far is already a good indication that such an assumption is well founded. It becomes even more certain when one considers *the Johannine apologetic, which is centred around the Law*. The Jews base their accusations upon the Law—it could not be otherwise; but is it equally a matter of fact that Jn should base his rebuttal (viz., should have Jesus base his rebuttal) of the Jewish accusations on the Law and OT revelation and that he should argue the way he does (as a Jew debating with Jews)?

In his work on the Fourth Gospel, K. Bornhäuser kept raising the question: for whom would a manner of presentation such as that found in Jn be understandable, meaningful, actual? <sup>36</sup> The question

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<sup>36</sup> *Op. cit.*, *passim*.

is a valid one, for faithfulness to tradition can account for such a presentation only to a limited extent. The disputes of Jesus with the Jewish authorities on issues of the Law were no doubt traditional (as we have seen), but Jn elaborates upon these and develops aspects which would be meaningful especially (and often exclusively) in a Jewish context—in a debate with the Jews. (See what is said below on the “representative” value such a presentation may have for circles which are non-Jewish.)

The apologetic use Jn makes of the Law was the object of Part Two and Part Three of this dissertation. Jn is not content with showing that the accusations the Jews make against Jesus in the name of the Law are ill-founded, he passes on to show how the Law should lead to the recognition of Jesus and is violated by those who condemn him.

#### D) *The Law should lead to the recognition of Jesus*

In answering the accusations of the Jews and “their” Law, Jn has recourse to the Law :

— The Jews accuse Jesus of violating the Sabbath. Jn replies (5,17; 7,21-24)<sup>37</sup> by showing that Moses himself, in the Law, had prepared the way for a correct understanding of the significance of Jesus’ Sabbath work by prescribing Sabbath circumcision. The Sabbath work of Jesus is presented as the fulfilment of the Law and (if the hypothesis of Cullmann is followed) as giving rise to the “true Sabbath” of God in the new Aeon.

— The Jews accuse Jesus of blaspheming by calling himself “Son of God”. Jn has recourse to the word written in “their” Law in order to show that the claim of Jesus was prophetically anticipated in the Law (Jn 10,34-36).<sup>38</sup>

— The Jews complain that the teaching of Jesus is contrary to that of Moses, that it is self-witnessing and therefore contrary to the Law. Jn gives an elaborate answer to such accusations and shows that : 1) Moses will condemn the Jews unless they recognize Jesus as the one to whom he pointed (Jn 5,45-47)<sup>39</sup> and to whom the whole Jewish “Heilsgeschichte” (Sinai revelation, OT, John the Baptist,

<sup>37</sup> See above, pp. 158ff.

<sup>38</sup> See above, pp. 175ff.

<sup>39</sup> See above, pp. 231ff.

"works" of Jesus—and, in all these, God himself) bore "witness" (Jn 5,31-39);<sup>40</sup> 2) the condition laid down by the Law, according to which the testimony of two men must be accepted as "truthful", is fulfilled in an eminent manner in the testimony the Father and Jesus render to the "truthfulness" of his teaching (self-revelation) (Jn 8, 12-20).<sup>41</sup>

— The Jews believe that the Law demands the death of Jesus as one whose "work" is opposed to the Law (Jn 19,7) and who is a threat to the survival of the Jewish nation (Jn 11,47-52).<sup>42</sup> For Jn the death of Jesus is demanded by the Law as its fulfilment. Everything concerning Jesus (his origin, his rejection, his whole "work"—his death on the cross in particular) had been foretold by and is the fulfilment of the Scripture (Law).<sup>43</sup> The "work" of Jesus marks the end of the Jewish privileges and gives birth to the new people, as Caiaphas, the High Priest of the Jews, had prophesied (Jn 11,47-52).

#### E) *The Law is violated by those who condemn Jesus*

This is but the reverse side of the question. Since the Law testifies to Jesus, since he is its fulfilment, to reject him means to reject the Law.

The Jews do not "do the will of God" because they do not believe on Jesus (7,17),<sup>44</sup> they refuse to do "the work of God" which is to have faith on the one whom he sent (6,28f).<sup>45</sup> They do not "do the Law" because they seek to kill Jesus (7,19)<sup>46</sup> and judge with a judgement which is "according to appearances" and "according to the flesh" (7,24; 8,15).<sup>47</sup> Indeed, they pronounce a judgement upon Jesus without respecting the very conditions which the Law sets down as necessary prerequisites for the pronouncement of a "just" judgement (Jn 7,51).<sup>48</sup>

Both sides of the question are taken up together in the trial before

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<sup>40</sup> See above, pp. 209ff.

<sup>41</sup> See above, pp. 263ff.

<sup>42</sup> On Jn 11,47-52, see pp. 117ff; 299ff; on Jn 19,7, see pp. 315ff.

<sup>43</sup> See above, pp. 319ff.

<sup>44</sup> On Jn 7,17, see pp. 133ff..

<sup>45</sup> See pp. 390ff.

<sup>46</sup> See pp. 130ff.

<sup>47</sup> See pp. 166ff and 272ff.

<sup>48</sup> See pp. 138ff.

Pilate.<sup>49</sup> In the eyes of the Jews the Law demands the death of Jesus because he is opposed to the Law; in the eyes of the evangelist the Law demands the death of Jesus because it was given by God through Moses precisely in order to find its fulfilment in the death of Jesus. The death of Jesus comes about as a result of the Father's will, not because he is proven guilty—the Law is impotent to condemn Jesus.

We have often remarked that what we have in Jn are two different understandings of the Law (that of the Jewish Church and that of the Synagogue), and we have often pointed out that such an ambivalence can be accounted for only if the *Sitz im Leben* of the confrontation between Jesus and the Jews as recorded in Jn is to be sought in the situation of Jewish-Christians with regard to the Synagogue in the last decades of the first century.

The *Sitz im Leben*, the origin and destination of the Fourth Gospel, were not under direct investigation in the course of our study; but it is impossible to avoid the question when dealing with Jn's understanding of the Law, indeed one must consider this question if one is to arrive at a correct understanding of the Law in Jn.

F) *The controversy between the Jewish Church and the Synagogue as reflected in the polemic over Christ and the Law in Jn*

It is not our intention to try to marshal all the arguments which speak in favour of considering the Fourth Gospel as destined to a Jewish audience<sup>50</sup>—this goes beyond our scope. But *within the more limited horizon of the Johannine presentation and use of the Law, there is ample evidence that Jn has such an audience in mind.*

The central role the Law plays in the dramatic exposition and development of the controversy between the Jews and Jesus has already been mentioned as an indication which speaks in favour of holding that Jn is dealing with Jewish adversaries—especially when one considers that not only the attacks of the Jews but the very

<sup>49</sup> See what has been said on Jn 19,7, pp. 320ff.

<sup>50</sup> Most of these arguments have been exposed by Bornhäuser (*op. cit.*, *passim*), Hirsch (*op. cit.*, *passim*) and, more recently, by van Unnik (*art. cit.*, *StudEv* I, 382-411), J. A. T. Robinson ("The Destination and Purpose of St John's Gospel", *NTS* 6 (1959-60) 117-131; r.p. in: *Twelve New Testament Studies*, 107-125; "The New Look on the Fourth Gospel", *StudEv* I (Berlin, 1959), 338-350; r.p. *ibid.*, 94-106) and H. Mulder ("Ontstaan en Doel van het vierde Evangelie", *GerefTheolTijdschrift* 69 (1969) 233-258).

"apologia" of Jesus is based upon the Law and that the manner of argumenting is typically Jewish, not to say Rabbinical (Jn 10,34-36 !). Nothing quite similar to Jn's apologetic use of the Law is to be found in the Synoptics, not even in Mt, the most Jewish of the three.

The strongest evidence comes from a number of texts, dealt with in the course of our investigation, which pin them down to a very specific historical situation: the battle "normative" Judaism waged against Jewish-Christians towards the end of the first century. We shall list these texts briefly, referring the reader back to what has been said of each of these in the course of our enquiry.

The term ἀποσυνάγωγος made its appearance thrice in Jn: Jn 9,22; 12,42 and 16,2. J. L. Martyn has rightly capitalized on these texts<sup>51</sup> to back up his hypothesis that the conflict between Jesus and the Jews is to be seen on two levels. In describing the conflict between Jesus and the Jews Jn is, at the same time, describing the conflict between the Church and the Synagogue.

It is common knowledge that the "banishment" implied in the term ἀποσυνάγωγος cannot be identified with the Jewish "bans" which existed during the lifetime of Jesus and that we are dealing in Jn with "legal" measures which could not possibly have existed at the time of Christ. The measures, we have seen, make no sense unless they are aimed at Jews—so that Jn is actually telling us about the consequences the confession of Jesus as the Messiah had for Jewish-Christians. If Jn 9,22; 12,42; 16,2 are particularly explicit and helpful, it does not mean that the situation here described is to be found only here in the Fourth Gospel. Once again the study of Martyn is helpful in understanding the preponderant influence the situation of the Johannine church had in shaping the conflicts reported in Jn 5; 7; 9, although the author, in our opinion, has overstated his case and forced some texts to say what they do not.

We found traces of the Church—Synagogue controversy at Jn 5,41-44; 7,14-18; 7,47-49; Jn 9 (vv. 24-34 in particular); Jn 19,38; Jn 11,47-52; Jn 1,45, and, more generally, in the Johannine apologetic and his "ambivalent" use of the Law (see below).

Jn 5,41-44 was connected with 9,22; 12,42; 16,2 and 19,38.<sup>52</sup> Jesus accuses the Jews of not believing because they prefer the honour of men to the honour (glory) which comes from God. An examination

<sup>51</sup> *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (New York, 1968), 18-41.

<sup>52</sup> See above, pp. 231ff.

of these texts revealed that they allude to the position of Jews who believed in Jesus (or were at least sympathetic to his cause) and yet refused to confess him openly for fear of having to sever ties with the Jewish community.

It is basically the same situation reflected in Jn 9.<sup>53</sup> Here a Jew has the courage of defending Jesus against the attacks of the disciples of Moses. He discusses the question of Jesus' origin and power over the Sabbath with them, declares that Jesus is *παρὰ θεοῦ* (the Son of God) rather than a "sinner", and is consequently cast out of the Synagogue. The blind man, we maintained, is a figure of the true disciple and the debate which takes place between him and the Pharisees is actually the debate which took place between the Jewish Church and the Synagogue. It centred around the person of Jesus (his origin and authority) and that of the (Sabbath) Law.

The same situation came to light in Jn 7,47-49 and Jn 7,14-18.<sup>54</sup> Just as the blind man was reviled and cast out because, being an *עַם הָאָרֶץ*, he presumed to "teach" the disciples of Moses something which seemed to them incompatible with the teaching of their master, so too is Jesus cause of indignation at Jn 7,14-18 because he presumes to "teach" in the Temple without having been the disciple of any Rabbi and without belonging to the chain of tradition which goes back to Moses. Jesus is accused of being a *πλάνος* and, at 7,47-49, those ignorant of the Law are said to have fallen victims to his false teaching and to have therefore been led astray from the Torah.

Without denying that the accusations made against Jesus were also made against his followers (as Jn 9 richly illustrates), we believe it is excessive to wish to find an allusion to the situation of the members of the Johannine community in every detail of the conflict between Jesus and the Jews in the Fourth Gospel. The "einmalig" (as Martyn puts it) is the predominating factor—the re-enactment in the life of the Church is not always explicitly developed. The reason for this is quite simple: the controversy between Jn and the Synagogue had *the historical person and work of Jesus* as its main object. The disciples were probably accused of being false teachers, of "misleading" the people by propagating heretical doctrines, they were no doubt tracked down and persecuted, but the main attack was directed against their founder. The main object of Jewish counter-measures was

<sup>53</sup> See what has been said on pp. 26ff; 101; 105ff.

<sup>54</sup> See pp. 101ff (Jn 7,45-49) and pp. 87ff (Jn 7,14-18).



to discredit *Jesus and his teaching*—the rest followed “*per se*”. Consequently, Jn was mainly intent upon defending Jesus and his “work”, basing himself on historical tradition, although he viewed it through the situation he and his community were living. Such a perspective should deter one from attempting to find two levels to every situation of conflict, and to see the “Christian teacher” personified by Jesus at Jn 5 and 9, or “potential converts” of the Apostolic church in the cripple and man born blind.<sup>55</sup>

Another text which reflects the debate between the Church and the Synagogue is Jn 11,47-52.<sup>56</sup> The fall of Jerusalem, we have seen, added fuel to the fire and helped the cause of Jewish-Christians. Was not the destruction ample proof that God had been displeased with the Judaism which dominated the life of the Jews before the catastrophe and which now had the presumption of attempting to reassert its claims? The rejection of the Messiah had been punished—Judaism had no longer any right to consider itself the heir of the promises. Those Jews who had believed on Jesus (the Gentiles are not excluded but are not taken into consideration by Jn) are the true heirs of the promise, they constitute the new Israel.

Such is the perspective presented by Jn 11,47-52, as is illustrated by the trial of Jesus.<sup>57</sup> In order to have him condemned, the Jews are forced to assume an attitude of abject servility towards the Romans. They succeed in having him condemned not as a transgressor of the Mosaic Law, but as an enemy of Caesar—an obviously false charge. The implicit acknowledgement of the impotence of “their” Law goes hand in hand with the abdication of their religious privileges: they acclaim Caesar as their king and thereby renounce their right to consider themselves the “people of God”, who have never “served” anyone (8,33).

Jn therefore draws a distinction between the “Jews” and “Israelites”. We examined this question when we dealt with Jn 1,45<sup>58</sup> and tried to show that Jn claims for Jewish-Christians the exclusive right of calling themselves “Israelites”. The Fourth Gospel distinguishes

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<sup>55</sup> Martyn himself raises the question: “Have we not overstepped the bounds of probability? The drama may indeed reflect two levels *in general*. But do we not press the case too far ...?” (71). We believe he has, especially on pp. 55f.

<sup>56</sup> See pp. 117ff and 299ff.

<sup>57</sup> See pp. 122ff; 315ff and Chapter Ten.

<sup>58</sup> See pp. 293f.

between Jews and "Jews"—Jews who have come to Christ (= "Israelites") and Jews who have hardened themselves against Jesus and his message (= "Jews"—enemies of Jesus, "normative" Judaism).

It is the controversy between the Church and the Synagogue which is at the root of the meaning Jn gives the term *νόμος*.

#### G) *The meaning of νόμος in Jn*

We have refrained from considering the meaning of *νόμος* in Jn until now<sup>59</sup> because all the pieces of the puzzle had to be gathered before it could be put together. The time has now come to define precisely what Jn meant by *ὁ νόμος*.

In seeking to determine the meaning of *νόμος* in Jn, it will be well to take Paul as a term of comparison. Paul was a Jew, a Pharisee, and perhaps even a disciple of Gamaliel the Elder. The battle he fought was against Judaizers and the Law is a central issue in his Epistles. In view of these factors, Paul offers an interesting term of comparison—especially when one bears in mind that some authors have gone so far as to explain Jn's view of the Law by using Pauline categories.<sup>60</sup>

Paul uses the word *νόμος* to designate: 1) the Decalogue and the Mosaic Law in the "strict" sense—as a body of legislation; 2) the Pentateuch; 3) the OT as a whole. In this respect, Pauline usage corresponds to the usage of the word *תורה* found in Rabbinical Judaism.<sup>61</sup> But Paul also uses *νόμος* in an "extended" or "improper" sense (from a Jewish point of view) and speaks of "the law of the flesh, the law of sin, the law of the Spirit, the law of faith, the law of Christ, etc." In such cases as these, *νόμος* no longer indicates the *תורה*; it no longer has its consecrated Jewish sense, but takes on the meaning it has in the Greek tradition.

Jn differs from Paul in that he uses *νόμος* only in the consecrated Jewish sense.

<sup>59</sup> The only point that was made so far (apart from the obvious ambivalence the term has in Jn) is that *νόμος* should possibly be distinguished from *γραφή*. See above, pp. 327ff.

<sup>60</sup> Notably Hirsch, *op. cit.*

<sup>61</sup> Rabbinical Judaism furthermore uses the word to designate the body of tradition which is not to be found in the OT, but supposedly goes back to Moses (what we would call "orthodox Jewish teaching").

Dodd<sup>62</sup> gives the following breakdown of the meanings νόμος acquires in Jn : 1) the Torah as criminal code of Law—7,51; 8,17; 18,31; 19,7; 2) the Torah in the comprehensive sense—as the authoritative basis of the whole religious life and thought of Israel—1,17; 7,19.23; 7,49 (in the most general sense); 1,45—primarily the Pentateuch; 10,34; 15,25 (Psalms) and 12,34 (Prophets) refer to the OT as a whole. The classification of Gutbrod<sup>63</sup> is basically the same : 1) 1,45—Pentateuch; 10,34; 12,34; 15,25 (all referring to the Psalms)—OT as a whole; 2) the Torah in the more specific sense—"Gebot" = 7,19.23; "Rechtsordnung" (and "Gebot") = 7,51; 18,31; 19,7.

On the basis of the exegesis of the texts presented in the course of this work, we would propose the following correctives to the classifications of Dodd and Gutbrod : 1) Jn 1,45—Jn distinguishes between the Law (ὁ νόμος) written by Moses and the Prophets; i.e., between התורה and הנביאים. Νόμος stands for the Pentateuch. 2) Jn 10,34; 12,34; 15,25. The word of the Law (what is written in the Law, what the Law says) refers to a quotation from the Psalms (perhaps from the Prophets). Here νόμος stands for the whole of the OT. 3) Jn 8,17. What is written in the Law refers to a specific "legal principle" (Dt 17,6, etc.), so that νόμος stands for the Law as "Rechtsordnung". The same meaning is present in the use of νόμος at Jn 7,51 (the hearing of witnesses—of the accused) and 19,7 (blasphemers must be put to death). 4) The reference to the Law as "Rechtsordnung" is also to be found at 18,31, but there is no reference to a specific point of Law. 5) At 1,17; 7,19.23.49 νόμος is taken in the most comprehensive sense—as the body of teaching revealed to Moses which constitutes the foundation of the whole social-religious life and thought of Israel.

Once these distinctions have been made, one must immediately add that *the Law in its most comprehensive sense is always present in the Johannine use of νόμος*. In line with Jewish usage and with the Pharisaical conception in particular, the part represents the whole, the whole is present in its parts. It is therefore impossible to separate the "comprehensive use" from the "specific use", even though the distinctions given above are legitimate. To disregard this factor would mean to deprive the reasoning of Jn of much of its force.

When, at 10,34; 12,34 and 15,25, Jn has recourse to the Law to substantiate the claims of Jesus, the "word" of the Psalm in question

<sup>62</sup> *Interpretation*, 76ff.

<sup>63</sup> *TWNT* IV, 1075, 22ff.

represents the Law as a whole. The Law alluded, prophetically, to the divine Sonship of Jesus and to the reality of divine filiation made possible by the coming of the word of God to men;<sup>64</sup> the Law spoke of the Messiah "remaining forever"—a prophetic reference to the power of Christ over death;<sup>65</sup> the Law had prophesied that Jesus would be hated without cause—the hatred of the Jews which leads to his death was part of the divine plan.<sup>66</sup>

At Jn 7,51 <sup>67</sup> the words of Nicodemus "prima facie" recall a precept of the Law which should govern legal procedure, but the real point of the objection raises the issue of the relationship of the Law, in the "comprehensive sense", to Jesus (viz., of Jesus to the Law in the "comprehensive sense").

An examination of 7,19 <sup>68</sup> and 7,23 <sup>69</sup> (where we refused to equate νόμος with the precept of circumcision) showed that, here too, νόμος is to be understood in the "comprehensive sense" (rightly Dodd, vs. Gutbrod). The Jews do not do the Law, are unfaithful to the Law, when they seek to kill Jesus because the Law wrote about him and should lead to accept him (7,17; 7,19); they misunderstand the Law when they are indignant about his Sabbath work, because it fulfills the Law (7,23).

At 19,7 we discerned <sup>70</sup> a primary allusion to the charge of blasphemy but as capsulizing the whole teaching and activity of Jesus. When, at 18,31,<sup>71</sup> Pilate invites the Jews to judge Jesus according to "their" Law, ὁ νόμος, on his lips, naturally means the Law as a criminal code. But, in the mind of the evangelist, it means much more. We trust that our exegesis of Jn 18,31 and 19,7 has brought out the theological significance of these passages (and the "comprehensive meaning" given to νόμος) and has disproved the statement of Dodd, according to which "the references to the νόμος in the narrative of the trial before Pilate (18,31; 19,7) are of no special significance".<sup>72</sup> One cannot hold that νόμος, in these passages,

<sup>64</sup> On Jn 10,34-36, see pp. 175ff.

<sup>65</sup> On Jn 12,34: see pp. 336ff.

<sup>66</sup> On Jn 15,25, see pp. 331 and 337, n. 86.

<sup>67</sup> See pp. 138ff.

<sup>68</sup> See pp. 130ff.

<sup>69</sup> See pp. 158ff.

<sup>70</sup> See Chapter Ten.

<sup>71</sup> See pp. 310ff.

<sup>72</sup> *Interpretation*, 76.

only has the meaning of "the law governing the administration of justice in the Jewish community, like the *νόμος* of any Greek city ..." <sup>73</sup> As for Jn 1,17 and 7,49, the "comprehensive sense" is the only sense possible.

The conclusion which can be drawn from a survey of all the Johannine texts where the term *νόμος* appears is that *νόμος* always retains the specific meaning given in the Jewish tradition to the word *תורה*—which is probably why it is always used with the article.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, even when Jn refers to a particular aspect or text of the Law, it is always the Law as a whole, as the body of divine revelation given to Moses, passed on from generation to generation and constituting the foundation of Judaism, which lurks in the background.<sup>75</sup>

When compared with Paul, Jn appears more faithful to the Jewish tradition in his use of *νόμος*; the term never moves from the Jewish into the Greek field of meaning. In this respect Jn is more Jewish than Paul, the Pharisee!

More Jewish than Paul in the manner in which he uses the term *νόμος*, Jn, contrary to Paul, seems to consider the Law as an "outsider" when he speaks of it as the *Law of the Jews*.

a) 'Ο *νόμος τῶν Ἰουδαίων*

Whenever Jesus speaks of the *νόμος* in the Fourth Gospel (7,19.23; 8,17; 10,34; 15,25), he invariably refers to it as the *Law of the Jews* (ὁ *νόμος ὑμῶν*, *ὑμετέρος, αὐτῶν*, 8,17; 10,34;<sup>76</sup> 15,25) or as the Law given to the Jews by Moses (7,19; comp. 7,23)—in much the same manner as Pilate, who calls the Law *ὁ νόμος ὑμῶν* (18,31). Nicodemus, one of the Pharisees, refers to the Law as *ὁ νόμος ἡμῶν* (7,51) and the Jews, at 19,7, say: *ἡμεῖς νόμον ἔχομεν καὶ κατὰ τὸν νόμον* (i.e., *ἡμῶν*) *ὀφείλει κ.τ.λ.* The Law is quite consistently characterized as "the Law of the Jews".

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> The article is omitted only once (19,7a). The reason for the omission is obvious and Jn immediately has the Jews specify that it is according to the Law that Jesus must die (19,7b).

<sup>75</sup> A. Humbert rightly points out that "il convient de ne pas accentuer ces différents sens" (i.e., the different senses *νόμος* can have in Jn). Cf. "L'observance des commandements dans les écrits johanniques", *Studia Moralia*, I (Rome, 1963), 187-219, 190.

<sup>76</sup> Some witnesses omit the *ὑμῶν* at 10,34, but the omission can be easily explained. Cf. Brown, *ad loc.*, vs. Barrett and Bultmann.

This Johannine peculiarity has retained the attention of exegetes and has received the following explanations: 1) The expression has a hostile connotation and marks the dissociation of Jesus and/or the evangelist from the Law and Judaism.<sup>77</sup> 2) The expression means "precisely the Law to which you appeal and on which you rely". It does not indicate that the evangelist and/or Jesus are dissociated from the Law and Judaism.<sup>78</sup>

An attempt to fuse the two, by distinguishing between the meaning the expression "your Law" would have on the lips of Jesus and on those of the evangelist, disregards the fact that the words are attributed to Jesus by the evangelist. It is consequently of little use to say that "your Law" would have meaning 2) on the lips of Jesus and meaning 1) in the mind of the evangelist.<sup>79</sup>

Among those who interpret "your Law" in the first sense (as marking "dissociation and distance" from Judaism and the Law) some insist that it is Jesus who considers himself (who is considered to be) outside and above the Law,<sup>80</sup> others that it is the Church (the evangelist) that considers itself (himself) outside the Jewish system.<sup>81</sup> The distinction may be made, provided no opposition is intended. The Church would hardly have considered itself outside or beyond the Law if the Master had not done so.<sup>82</sup> If Jn presents Jesus as above or beyond the Law it is because he considers his followers to be above or beyond the Law *in virtue* of their relationship to Jesus, who was above and beyond the Law.

We are therefore left with the alternative: does "your Law" mean that Jn and his community dissociate themselves from Judaism and the Law or does it simply stress that the Law is precisely the Law

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<sup>77</sup> So Bultmann (212); Dodd (*Interpretation*, 82); Bernard (ad 8,17); Barrett (ad 8,17); Brown (ad 7,19 and 8,17).

<sup>78</sup> So Charlier (*art. cit.*, *RB* 67 (1960) 503-517; 506); Gutbrod (*TWNT* IV, 1077); Lagrange (ad 10,34); Hoskyns (ad 10,34); Westcott (ad 8,17); Lightfoot (293, ad 15,25); Th. Zahn (ad 10,34).

<sup>79</sup> Brown (ad 8,17) writes that "your Law" on the lips of the historical Jesus would have meant "the Law to which you appeal". But see the following note.

<sup>80</sup> Loisy (627), Lightfoot (196, ad 8,17.18) and Schlatter (ad 8,17) rightly remark that Jesus, as the Son of God, is above the Law and therefore can speak of it as "your Law"—the Law is not binding for him.

<sup>81</sup> See n. 77.

<sup>82</sup> It is *somewhat* inexact to say that "your Law" would be "plus conforme au point de vue de l'écrivain qu'au langage du Christ historique", as Loisy (555) does. Cf. also Barrett (ad 8,17) and Bernard (ad 8,17), who also affirm this and comp. n. 80.

to which the Jews appeal? Neither position is without difficulty.

The fact that Jesus (Jn) *consistently* <sup>83</sup> refers to the Law as "your, their Law" (ὁ νόμος ὑμῶν, αὐτῶν) cannot be fully accounted for by the "ad hominem" approach Jesus would be using.<sup>84</sup> That ὁ νόμος ὑμῶν should appear in direct debates with the Jews speaks in favour of such an interpretation, but a text like 15,25 cannot be explained on this basis.<sup>85</sup> Even when one abstracts from 15,25, the Johannine usage is not sufficiently accounted for by interpreting "the Law to which you appeal". One has the distinct impression of a certain distance—that the Law is being looked upon as associated in some special way with the Jews, that it means more or at least something else to them than it does to Jesus and to the evangelist.

On the other hand, it is not possible to deny that Jn attributes great importance to the Law, that the use he makes of it is very Jewish and that his attitude towards the Law is hardly that of one who considers the Law no longer relevant.

One is apparently faced with an insoluble dilemma: Jn dissociates himself from the Law and yet is closer to the Law than Paul! We believe that the confrontation between the Jewish Church and the Synagogue offers a solution to the dilemma and explains why the Law can be called "the Law of the Jews".

There is a sense in which the Law retains all its value for Jn and Christians (see below), but it is impossible to give the Law the same value it had before the coming of Christ after he had come (see below). This is what the Jews (normative Judaism) attempted to do. Nothing had changed for them, one's relationship to God was determined by one's relationship to the Law and the Law was still interpreted as it had been in the Jewish tradition which supposedly went back to Moses. What characterized Judaism was the Law—in the interpretation given to it traditionally by the Jews. What characterized

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<sup>83</sup> At 7,23.49 and 12,34 the Law is not explicitly qualified as "of the Jews" but, besides the fact that Jesus is speaking only at 7,23, this is sufficiently clear from the context. The omission of the qualification at 1,17 and 1,45 has good grounds (the first is found in the Prologue, where the specification would have been out of place and disturbed the metric, the second is on the lips of the disciples of Jesus, who refer to the Pentateuch as bearing witness to Christ). In all the other cases, νόμος is qualified as being "of the Jews".

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Bernard, ad 8,17.

<sup>85</sup> The difficulty is admitted by Gutbrod (*TWNT* IV, 1077, n. 287), who fails to provide a satisfactory explanation (he simply refers to Jn 16,2!).

Jewish-Christians was not the Law, but faith in Christ. The Law was therefore more of a characteristic of "normative Judaism" than of Christianity and this, to our mind, explains the Johannine usage. When Jn says "your Law" he not only means "the Law to which you appeal"; he also means to dissociate himself from the attitude normative Judaism takes towards the Law and from the meaning and value they continue to give it. It is from such a Law (which can simply be called the "Law of the Jews" because such it always was and remains) that Jn and Christians dissociate themselves. But there is a sense in which the Law retains its meaning and value and, in this sense, Jn considers it neither with hostility nor with detachment.

If the Law in the traditional interpretation, which had become "normative" or "orthodox" with the Council of Jamnia, was the most powerful arm used against the Jewish-Christians, the Jewish-Christians, on their part, also used the Law to defend themselves. But their defence was based exclusively on one part of the Law: the Scriptures.

It is a recognized fact that the apologetic of the first Christians of the early Christian Church (which was Jewish in its initial stages) was based upon the Scriptures and that, following the example of their Master, Christians distinguished between the written Law—the OT (which they accepted as divine revelation, although they considered its ritual-cultic prescriptions as superseded) and the traditions of the "elders" (of the Pharisees)—the "oral" Law, which they rejected as the doctrine of men (in this the Christians were in agreement with the Sadducees). In their approach to the OT they borrowed the exegetical methods of Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism and, in a few rare instances, even borrowed material from the Midrash (the best example is 1 Cor 10,4). but they did not attempt to defend Christianity through the use of consecrated Pharisaical traditions and doctrines. In defending their faith in Christ, Christians did not have recourse to the Mishnah, but to the Scriptures and, moreover, to certain sections of the Scriptures (which led Judaism to outlaw the LXX, to insist on the Mishnah as the key to the written Law—and to devote more study to the Scriptures!). Christians denied non-believing Jews "the ability to discern the wisdom of (the) Scriptures" <sup>86</sup> and claimed to be in possession of the key to the correct understanding of the OT

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<sup>86</sup> Cf. Justin's *Dialogue*, LV.



in virtue of their faith in Jesus—who was its fulfilment and hence its ultimate meaning.

We pointed out that, in the Fourth Gospel, the term *νόμος* has a nuance *γραφή* does not have.<sup>87</sup> Never does Jn designate the Scriptures as the Scriptures *of the Jews*! In keeping with primitive Christian tradition, he considers the OT to be the word of God, bases his apologetic exclusively on the OT (although he twice has recourse to Rabbinical principles and practice derived therefrom—Jn 7,21-23; 9,31—and makes large use of Rabbinical method—notably at 10,34-36 and 7,21-23) and considers the *γραφή* (or *γραφαί*)<sup>88</sup> the patrimony of *Christians*. He explicitly states that the Jews do not understand the Scriptures they search (5,37-39) and makes the correct understanding of the *γραφή* dependent upon the gift of the Spirit given to believers after the resurrection.<sup>89</sup> It is Jesus who, through his glorification, discloses the true meaning of the Scriptures.<sup>90</sup> If one must believe the writings of Moses in order to believe the words of Jesus (5,47), it is also true that one must believe in Jesus in order to believe the Scriptures (2,17.22!). Jn can deny the Jews the right to consider themselves the depositaries of the “word” of God (divine revelation, with a secondary reference to the Scriptures) because they do not “believe him whom He sent” (5,38).

If Jn qualifies the Law, but not the Scriptures, as being *of the Jews*, it is because the Law (*ὁ νόμος*) had become closely identified with normative Judaism, the Scriptures (*ἡ γραφή, αἱ γραφαί*) had not. It is for this reason, in our opinion, that Jn prefers to speak of Jesus fulfilling the Scripture(s) rather than the Law. Not that Jn would not hold that Jesus fulfills the Law (cf. 7,21-23; comp. 7,17.19.

<sup>87</sup> See above, pp. 327ff.

<sup>88</sup> We are in agreement with Schrenk (*TWNT* I, 750-754) when he holds that *γραφή*, like *γραφαί*, can indicate the whole of the OT *even when* it indicates a specific passage of the Scripture.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Betz, *Der Paraklet*, 184: “Diese Gnosis (i.e., the deeper understanding of Jesus’ word) kommt so zustande, dass das Christugeschehen mit dem Wort der Schrift verknüpft und in dessen Licht erkannt wird ... Jetzt glaubt man Jesu Wort und ausserdem der Schrift, die durch das Christugeschehen als wirkende Wahrheit bestätigt ... neu erfahren wird ...”

<sup>90</sup> Goppelt, speaking of the different understanding of the Scriptures manifested by the Jews and Jesus in Jn writes: “Den Jüngern hat, wie stark betont wird, vor allem der Auferstandene ... durch seine Verherrlichung als solche, die Augen für das Verständnis der Schrift und seiner Geschichte in ihrem Lichte geöffnet (J 2,17.22; 12,16; 20,9)”. *Typos*, 216.

51 and especially 19,7). Insofar as the Scriptures are part and parcel of the Law (even for the "Jews"), Jesus fulfills the Law; in this sense the Law testifies to Jesus and against the Jews. But it is obvious that the Scriptures are not the whole Law for the adversaries Jn has in mind (normative Judaism). The fact that normative Judaism claimed the "Law" as its very own and gave it an interpretation of its own (backed by centuries of tradition), the fact, in other words, that the "Law" for the "Jews" was *twofold* (written and oral) and, in this sense, was "their" Law, made Jn avoid saying explicitly that Jesus fulfills the Law. On the other hand, Jn also avoids having even the Pharisees say that Jesus violates or abrogates the Law; what he (apparently) violates and abrogates is the Sabbath (which came to the same thing for the Pharisees, but not for Jn and his readers!).

Jn seems to be drawing a distinction analogous to that drawn by Paul between *γραφή* and *γράμμα*.<sup>91</sup> For the "Jews", the *νόμος* is the OT as interpreted and lived by normative Judaism. Jn reserves the term *γραφή* for the written Law (the OT) and uses *νόμος* in the broader sense. Insofar as it indicates the OT, *νόμος* has a positive connotation; insofar as it indicates the OT *in Pharisaical interpretation and practice*, it receives a negative connotation. Lastly, the negative connotation predominates in Jn because the "Jews" have made of the *νόμος* *their* Law, whereas Christians claim the *γραφή* as their own.

We may conclude by saying that the *νόμος*, as understood by Christian Jews, speaks in favour of Jesus and against the "Jews"; but the *νόμος*, in the sense in which it was the foundation of normative Judaism (the written Law as interpreted and regarded by normative Judaism—the Torah as the written and oral revelation of God to Moses on Sinai), receives a "negative" qualification in Jn and is considered with detachment. This explains: 1) the distinction between *νόμος* and *γραφή*; 2) the use of the qualification of the Law as "the Law of the Jews".

#### b) *The two understandings of the "Law" in Jn*

The reason for the epithet *ἰμῶν* becomes more evident when one considers the "ambivalence" of the term *νόμος* in Jn—which is likewise a result of the controversy between the Jewish Church and

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Schrenk, *TWNT* I, 765, 15ff.

the Synagogue. Again we can only take a brief retrospective glance at the ground covered, referring the reader to the individual sections which dealt exhaustively with this aspect of the Law in the Fourth Gospel.

Jn takes pains to show that Jesus is not opposed to the Law and that the Jews violate the Law when they condemn him. Jn also presents the "work" and person of Jesus in terms which would be intelligible to Judaism, drawing a line of continuity between the Law and the new reality which comes to be in Christ. On the other hand, Jn takes care to show that the Law, as interpreted by the Jews, is opposed to Jesus.

The whole confrontation between Jesus (Jn) and the Jews (and Judaism) revolves around the understanding of the Law, and what we have in Jn are two distinct understandings of the Law: the "traditional" understanding of the "Jews" and the understanding of the evangelist (of Christians).

The two understandings of the Law came to light with particular force in Jn's presentation of the reasons which led to Christ's death.<sup>92</sup> The Jews wish to have him condemned and executed because their Law demands his death as a violator of the Law—Jesus dies, in the view of Jn, because the Law demands his death in a radically different sense: as fulfilment of the divine plan which was prophetically alluded to in the Law.

During the trial, the Jews are unable to secure Jesus' condemnation and death through the agency and power of "their" Law. They must have recourse to Pilate and to a false charge. Pilate, in turn, sends Jesus to death in fulfilment of the divine will and in virtue of the power entrusted to him "from above". The same impotence of the Jews is made manifest throughout the Gospel. They believe that Jesus is opposed to the Law, as they understand it, yet they can never really prove their case. On the contrary, Jn shows that it is they who violate the Law by condemning Jesus. Their judgement is unjust because they judge "according to appearances" (7,24) and "according to the flesh" (8,15). Jn 7,51 shows that the Law itself lays down conditions for the judgement of Jesus which can be met only if one believes on Jesus.<sup>93</sup> By condemning Jesus, the Pharisees

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<sup>92</sup> See Chapter Ten, as capsulizing the "double" understanding of the Law exposed in the previous chapters.

<sup>93</sup> See pp. 138ff.

therefore violate the Law, as Nicodemus points out. The same thought is voiced at 7,17.19 and 6,28f.<sup>94</sup> To "do the will of God", "to do the Law" and "to do the work of God" is to believe on Jesus. Faith discloses the divine origin of Jesus and of his teaching. By seeking to kill Jesus the Jews do not do the Law, they violate it.

It is because the Jews are blind to the true value and meaning of the Law that the use they make of it (taking it in its "traditional" sense and applying it to Jesus as they would to any other man) leads them to an impasse.<sup>95</sup>

There is another understanding of the Law which escapes the Jews, but allows the work of Jesus to appear in its true significance. Jn 7,21-23; 10,34-36 and 8,12-20 present the "true understanding" of the Law. In dealing with these texts we pointed out that, in all three cases, we are in the presence of an argument which is cogent *only in a context of faith*.

This may not be so obvious at 7,21-23,<sup>96</sup> where there has been a healing even the Jews must acknowledge. Yet the argument is not strictly valid unless the healing is perceived as the gift of life, the healing of the whole man, superior to the spiritual reality represented by circumcision. At 10,34-36 <sup>97</sup> and 8,12-20 <sup>98</sup> the "petitio principii" is as manifest as the light of day. The reasoning is strictly valid only if one admits that Jesus has been sent by God in a very special sense and recognizes the testimony of the Father in that of Jesus.

The same appeal to faith came forth at Jn 5,31-40.<sup>99</sup> Here the main emphasis was not laid on the witness of the Baptist or on that of the "works", but on the Sinai revelation and on that of the Scriptures. But it is precisely the witness of OT revelation which is apparent only to faith. When the evangelist voices the opinion that OT revelation and the Scriptures testify to Jesus, he is therefore presuming that Christians alone have a correct understanding of OT revelation and the Scriptures! The same attitude is manifested when he declares that Moses accuses the Jews for not having accepted Jesus, because to believe in Moses and his writings means to believe in Jesus and his word.

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<sup>94</sup> See pp. 130ff and 390ff.

<sup>95</sup> See pp. 20ff.

<sup>96</sup> See pp. 158ff.

<sup>97</sup> See pp. 175ff; esp. 189ff.

<sup>98</sup> See pp. 263ff; esp. 275ff.

<sup>99</sup> See pp. 209ff.

What opposes Jesus (Jn and his community) to the Jews is a different understanding of the Law; the difference is determined by whether one believes in Jesus or not. The understanding of the "Jews" is that of "normative" Judaism; the understanding of Jn is that of Christians. These understandings can be more clearly specified.

Whereas for normative Judaism God revealed himself and his will in the Torah, for Jn (Christians) he revealed himself and his will in the last days in the person of Jesus. We saw that the revelation of God and his will was to lead man to salvation and life. For the Jews salvation and life are to be found in the Law, for Jn and Christians they are to be found in Jesus. The opposition between the Law and Jesus in the Fourth Gospel is based on the issue of "revelation" and "life" (the two are inseparable).

The opposition must be correctly understood. Once one admits that the final revelation of God and his will has taken place in Jesus, the problem of the value and meaning of God's previous revelation in the Law necessarily arises, if one is a Jew. The revelation of God to Israel was authentic revelation; no Jew, not even a Christian-Jew could deny that. What becomes of it now that God has chosen to reveal himself in a definitive manner in his Son?

The problem is twofold: 1) the meaning and value the Law had *before* the coming of Christ; 2) the meaning and value the Law has *after* the coming of Christ. It is important to distinguish between the two because, in our opinion, Jn is exclusively concerned with the second. His concern is determined by the attitude normative Judaism takes towards the Law. They continue to maintain that God revealed himself in the Law and only in the Law, that salvation is impossible unless one understands and follows the Law in the way in which it was always understood and followed in Israel (the interpretation of "normative" Judaism is *the* interpretation of the Law; no evolution is admitted—the Law is what it has always been—exactly as revealed to Moses). Jesus is therefore branded as an impostor and his teaching marked with the epithet "heresy". It is against this view that Jn is fighting. For him it may *have been* legitimate to say that God revealed himself in the Law (Jn does not reflect upon this), but now the revelation of God is to be found only in the Word-made-flesh.

Once this is affirmed two consequences necessarily follow: 1) The value of the Law is simply prophetic. Whatever may have been its

salvific power in the past (Jn does not reflect upon this explicitly), in the light of the Christ-event it appears as a pedagogical tool used by God to prepare his people to accept Christ as his Son and the Revealer. In this sense the Law retains all its meaning and value. 2) To wish to consider the Law as the revelation of God and the way to life *after* Christ's coming means to have misunderstood it, to have never understood it in the first place. It means to reject God's revelation, to remain in sin and to refuse the gift of life.

It is this perception which induces Jn to present the teaching-revelation of Jesus in terms which recall the Law but which dissociate it from the Law. In the new Aeon inaugurated by Jesus "to do the will of God", "to do the work of God", "to keep the word", "to keep the commandments" assume a new meaning, yet recall the realities of the "old order".<sup>100</sup> The prerogatives of the Law (of being the "bread of life", the "water of life", the "light of life" and, especially, of "giving life") are transferred to Jesus.<sup>101</sup> Jn would probably not deny that the Law *was* all this, but he is interested in the situation which has come to be through Jesus and not with that which existed before his coming.

To ask whether Jn believed that the Law *once was* the revelation of God (but can no longer be considered as such), whether the Law *once gave* life (but can no longer do so), is to go beyond the horizon of the evangelist. All he says is that the revelation and life is *now* to be found in Christ, not in the Law. If the Law has a revelatory and salvific function *now* it is only insofar as it leads to Jesus.

One would be tempted at this point to say that Jn is very close to Paul, but the Johannine perspective differs considerably from that of Paul.

There are three Johannine texts which, at first sight, seem quite Pauline: Jn 1,17; 6,28f and 8,30-36. Jn 1,17 apparently opposes the Law and grace (but see below); Jn 6,28f speaks of faith in such a way as to imply that it replaces the works of the Law; Jn 8,30-36 speaks of faith in Jesus as that which frees from the slavery of sin, can free the "Jews" (with their Law!) from the slavery of sin.

Jn 1,17 will be considered below.<sup>102</sup> We shall see that the contrast Jn is drawing between the Law and the "grace and truth" which have come to be through Jesus differs from the Pauline opposition Law—grace.

Jn 8,30-36 has been touched upon above.<sup>103</sup> The thought recalls the Pauline

<sup>100</sup> Cf. Chapters Eleven, Twelve and Thirteen, pp. 368ff.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Chapters Fourteen and Fifteen, pp. 454ff.

<sup>102</sup> See pp. 534ff.

<sup>103</sup> See pp. 393ff.

idea of the slavery to the Law which is closely associated with the slavery to sin, especially since Jesus in speaking with "Jews" and that it is these "Jews" who are said to be the slaves of sin, as opposed to those who have become true disciples of Jesus and are "free" from this slavery. It should be noted, however, that the Jews in question are those who have made an initial act of faith in Jesus. That which gives "freedom" is true discipleship, perfect faith. Furthermore (and this is even more important), the slavery is in no way characterized as the slavery of the Law, but as the slavery of sin. In the context of chapter 8, slaves to sin are all those who are not born anew, who do not hear and accept the revelation Jesus gives. *De facto*, those who are so qualified in Jn 8 are the "Jews" who cling to their Law and refuse to believe on Jesus, but nowhere does Jn say that it is the Law which makes of the Jews slaves of sin. The Johannine idea is rather that it is a false understanding of the Law, itself at one and the same time result and cause of unbelief, which makes of the Jews slaves of sin. At any rate the idea of "freedom from the Law" is to be found nowhere in Jn (see below).

Jn 6,28f<sup>104</sup> is curiously reminiscent of Paul in that faith is opposed to the works of the Law, but it should be remarked that faith is itself presented as a "work". Jn writes that the "work of God" is to believe on Jesus, that "to do the will of God" (7,17) and "to do the Law" (7,19) is to accept Jesus. Paul would avoid such language. Faith for Paul is not a "work" and to believe on Jesus is hardly "to do the Law". Jn draws a line of continuity where Paul draws an opposition.<sup>105</sup>

In the rest of the Gospel we find no trace of the Pauline opposition between χάρις and νόμος, πίστις and τὰ ἔργα τοῦ νόμου, "justification" by faith and "justification" through the accomplishment of the works of the Law. *If we abstract from the three texts just mentioned above*, we can affirm that: 1) Δίκαιος and δικαιοσύνη are used very rarely (δίκαιος = 5,30; 7,24; 17,25; δικαιοσύνη = 16,8.10); δικαιοῦν, δικαίωμα, etc., are never found in Jn. Δίκαιος and δικαιοσύνη are furthermore not used in the Pauline sense. 2) Ἐλεύθερος, ἐλευθεροῦν and ἐλευθερία are also conspicuously absent (ἐλευθερία does not even appear at Jn 8,30-36). 3) Δουλος is found used in the profane sense or to refer to the relationship of the disciples to Jesus. The verb δουλεύειν never appears. 4) The opposition χάρις — νόμος is absent. 5) Faith, of course, has a very important place in the Fourth Gospel (although the substantive is not to be found), but nowhere is faith in Jesus opposed to the works of the Law (not even at Jn 6,28f, which is the closest we ever come to such an opposition!).

Nowhere does Jn consider the observance of the Law opposed to faith, nowhere does he speak of the slavery of the Law or of freedom from the Law, much less does he say that the Law leads to sin.

What is attacked and condemned by Jn is a *false understanding of the Law which would oppose the Law and Jesus, observance of the Law and faith in Jesus*. Such is obviously not the Pauline view! Paul's

<sup>104</sup> See above, pp. 390ff.

<sup>105</sup> See what has been said in Chapters Eleven, Twelve and Thirteen, pp. 368ff.

view of the Law is basically negative. It was given to lead man to recognize his sinfulness and impotence and to yearn for the justification which comes from the grace of God given in Jesus Christ through the Spirit. Jn's view of the Law is basically positive. The Law has a positive function—as authentic divine revelation it was given to lead men to Christ, the perfect revelation of God. *The misunderstanding of the Law by the Jews, whereby the Law is considered opposed to Christ (viz., Christ to the Law), is viewed negatively by Jn, but not the Law as such.*

Paul considers the Law more from an "ethical" point of view (although this has "dogmatic" implications). The Law is the expression of the divine will which regulated man's conduct from Moses to Christ. Its function was to demand from man works he could not accomplish in order to lead him to recognize that only God's grace could justify him. The "works of the Law", the Law itself, were never able to justify man, and to cling to these "works" after the death of Christ means to declare his death null and void; the "works of the Law" are opposed to faith when one considers them a principle of justification.

Jn considers the Law more from the point of view of revelation; he is not interested in the Law as an ethical norm which leads man to confide in his own strength and merits and which should lead him to recognize the need for God's grace. Jn would no doubt agree with Paul that *after* Christ's coming there is only one way to life and that is to believe on Jesus, to keep *his* word and *his* commandments, but the idea of an opposition between faith in Jesus and the works of the Law never seems to cross his mind, nor does he ever raise the question of the role the Law played for those who lived *before* Christ's coming (a problem with which Paul was very much concerned). If the Jews are condemned in Jn, it is not because they put their trust in their works, but because they cling to the Law as the sole revelation of God and his will and, in the name of their (mis)understanding of the Law, refuse to accept Jesus and believe on him.

What can account for this difference of perspective? A first possibility would be to say that "der Kampf um das Gesetz" is a thing of the past and that for Jn the question of the relationship of the "works of the Law" and faith is no longer relevant. This is the explanation which is usually advanced,<sup>106</sup> but in our estimation

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<sup>106</sup> The opinion is so common that we need not give a list of the exegetes who have



it is untenable. The explanation we propose is that Jn, in the texts we have considered, is waging a battle "um das Gesetz", but it is not the same battle Paul waged. The battle Paul waged was against Jewish-Christians who wished to impose the Law upon Gentile converts to Christianity. In the mind of the "Judaizers" one must become a Jew in order to become a Christian and a Christian must follow the Law, be he Jew or Gentile. It was imperative for Paul to work out the relationship between the Law and faith in Jesus in order to carry on his missionary activity as the "apostle of the Gentiles". From the concrete situation with which he was faced, Paul developed his "theology" (if we can so call it) of the "Law" and "grace" and their mutual relationship. The death and resurrection of Christ is the end of the Law. To compel Gentiles to observe the Law as a condition for becoming part of the Church, or to hold that Jewish-Christians must observe the Law the way they always did although they have become Christians, is opposed to the Gospel.

The Pauline view prevailed against that of the more radical "Judaizers" within the Church and Paul won his battle, but only in principle and as far as the official attitude of the Church leaders was concerned. In practice it took a long time before the words, "There is no longer Jew or Greek ... you are all one in Christ Jesus" carried the day. Justin's Dialogue furnishes irrefutable evidence that Paul's victory in the Council of Jerusalem did not mean that some Jewish-Christians did not still seek to impose the Law on Gentile converts, much less did it mean that Jewish-Christians ceased to observe the Law (Mt bears eloquent witness that they did not!).<sup>107</sup>

Harnack has gone so far as to say that, according to Justin, a Jewish-Christian is a Jew who believes in Christ and observes the Law.<sup>108</sup> Both Harnack and Jocz are in agreement that Justin speaks of Jewish-Christians who keep the Law and demand that the Gentiles do likewise and Jewish-Christians who keep the Law but do not demand that the Gentiles do likewise.

It is therefore too sweeping a statement to affirm that, within the

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expressed themselves in this sense. It was already energetically proposed by Loisy in the first edition of his commentary: "Le quatrième Évangile suppose acquise et même dépassée la doctrine de saint Paul sur l'abrogation de la Loi" (502 and *passim*).

<sup>107</sup> Cf. Barth, *art. cit.*

<sup>108</sup> On the outlook of Jewish Christians concerning the Law, as presented by Justin in his *Dialogue* (and the shortcomings of Harnack's interpretation), see the excellent pages of Jocz, *op. cit.*, 170-174.

Church, the question of the relationship of faith in Christ and the observance of the Law had been so definitely solved and was so much a thing of the past that the Gospel of John need no longer mention it.<sup>109</sup> The reason for the silence of Jn on this point must lie elsewhere.

The struggle of Paul was against Jews within the Church who wished to make Christianity just another sect within Judaism. His struggle only met with partial success, the definitive victory was to come the moment in which the Church, in the course of history, dissociated itself from Judaism and became a predominantly Gentile Church. But what effect did Paul's activity have on Jews outside the Church? If we are to judge from the attitude of "normative Judaism", we must say that it only served to increase the hostility between the Synagogue and the Church (Jewish first, but then also Gentile). Right up to the end of the first century and afterwards the Jews still accused Jewish-Christians of betraying the Law either because they did not follow it or because, although they followed it, they held that Jesus was the Messiah and the Son of God and were consequently "unorthodox" in their attitude towards the Law.

*Judging from the texts we have considered*, it would appear that Jn is to be situated in a Jewish milieu, that his community is formed by Jewish-Christians who observe the Law, but who differ from their Jewish brethren because of the faith they have in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God and, consequently, in the attitude they assume towards the Law. While they follow it, they do not agree that their relationship to God is determined by their relationship to the Law, that God has revealed himself and his will exclusively in the Law. They claim that a Jew, however faithful to the Law of Moses, cannot be saved unless he believes in Jesus as the Christ and becomes a member of the community he formed, which has a "law" of its own: that of brotherly love and faithfulness to the "word" received from Jesus.

Only such a hypothesis can account for the Johannine presentation of the confrontation of Jesus and his followers with the "Jews" on the issue of the Law. The question: "Is the Law essential to the *via salutis* of the Christian and of the Church?" (Paul), is not raised by Jn. The main issue is the person of Jesus—is he the Messiah,

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<sup>109</sup> So Grässer, *art. cit.*, 79, n. 1, referring to Haenchen (*ThR* 23 (1955), 326). See above, n. 106.

the Son of God? The problem of the relationship of Jesus and his followers to the Law arises from this.

If Jesus is persecuted it is because of the claims he makes for his person. His followers were prosecuted for the same reason. What induces the Jews to cast out Jews from the Synagogue is not that they do not observe the precepts of the Law, but that they confess Jesus as the Christ. We have even seen that, historically, the measures taken by the Council of Jamnia make sense only if the Jews who had believed on Jesus were hardly to be distinguished from other Jews in their behaviour and pious practices. The recitation of the Birkat ha-Minim was a means of distinguishing those Jews who believed in Jesus from other Jews.

The Sabbath question would seem to speak in favour of considering the conflict with normative Judaism as also involving practical questions, such as the observance of the precepts. It is quite possible that Jewish-Christians were also considered lax in their attitude towards certain precepts of the Law (notably the Sabbath), but the point of the Sabbath controversy in Jn is the authority and position of Jesus with respect to the Law (whether he is opposed to it or fulfills it). It would appear that, even here, Jn is not *primarily* interested in the position in which the followers of Jesus are placed with respect to the observance of the precepts of the Law.<sup>110</sup> The followers of Jesus are accused of going against the Law, but it is because of their belief in Jesus, which they not only profess, but propagate, thus becoming, like their master, guilty of blasphemy, false teaching and subversion. In view of this they were considered "sinners", no matter how irreproachable their attitude towards the prescriptions of the Law may have been.

In an important article,<sup>111</sup> J. A. T. Robinson endeavoured to show that Jn is not addressing himself to Jewish-Christians who wish to make Jews of the Gentiles, but to Jews who accuse Jewish-Christians of having betrayed their heritage. According to this author, the question in Jn is not: "Who is the true Christian; need he observe the whole Law to qualify?"—this is the question with which Paul was dealing—but: "Who is the true Jew; he who believes in Jesus or he who refuses to believe (in the name of Moses)?" or, expressed in another way: "How can one believe on Jesus without ceasing to

<sup>110</sup> Rightly Grässer, *art. cit.*, 80, n. 2, referring to Bultmann, *Theologie*, 356.

<sup>111</sup> *Art. cit.*, in: *Twelve New Testament Studies*, 107-125.

be a Jew?" Jn answers this question by saying that it is the one who believes on Jesus who is the true Jew.<sup>112</sup>

An ever-increasing number of authors share the conviction that the Fourth Gospel is very Jewish in character and is addressed to Jews, not to Gentiles. Our study was not directly concerned with the destination and purpose of Jn; there were, consequently, many aspects of the Gospel we could not take into consideration. Our findings, however, do point decidedly in the direction marked out by Bornhäuser, Robinson, van Unnik, Mulder and others.<sup>113</sup> In our opinion, to affirm that Jn is writing from the standpoint of the Gentiles puts one in the impossibility of accounting for too many aspects of the Fourth Gospel and for the place, meaning and function the Law has in this Gospel in particular. One could maintain, with greater plausibility, that the "Jews" and their attitude towards Jesus are treated by Jn as a "symbol".

The attitude of the Jews in Jn certainly has universal value and represents unbelief, but, if Jn were merely holding up the unbelief of the Jews as typifying unbelief, one can hardly explain why Jn should have worked out the Jewish motives for unbelief (v.g., their supposed faithfulness to the Law and the teaching of Moses) with such minute care *nor* why he based his counter-attack on arguments which can be grasped in all their depth only by one who is well acquainted with Jewish thought. A reader of the XX century, who disposes of the tools of modern research, need not be steeped in the Jewish tradition to understand Jn, but what appeal would the Johannine presentation of Jewish unbelief have for a Gentile? The only Gentile mentioned in the Fourth Gospel is Pilate<sup>114</sup> and the whole Jewish problematic behind the conflict between Jesus and the Jews remains foreign to him!

The affirmation of Bultmann: "Die Gegner Jesu, die den Unglauben verkörpern, sind im 4. Evangelium die Juden; wie könnte es anders sein, wenn der Evangelist ein Leben Jesu darstellen wollte?"<sup>115</sup> is

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<sup>112</sup> *Art. cit.*, 115. Robinson's position on this point has been adopted by H. Mulder, *art. cit.*, 254: "de echte Jood is degene, die Jezus belijdt als de Christus, de Zoon van God, en die zich bekeert, al betekent dit een volledige breuk met zijn volksgenoten".

<sup>113</sup> Cf. R. M. Grant, "The Origin of the Fourth Gospel", *JBL* 69 (1950) 305-322; P. Winter, "Zum Verständnis des Johannesevangeliums", *VoxTheol* 25 (1955) 149-157.

<sup>114</sup> The *Ἕλληνες* of Jn 12,20 are not Greeks but Jews of the Diaspora.

<sup>115</sup> *Art. cit.*, *EvTheol* 4 (1937), 129.

definitely too naive. One has only to compare Jn with Mk and Lk to see how it is possible to write a "Leben Jesu" (Bultmann undoubtedly used the term in the broadest sense) without having to *insist* on the Jewish aspects of the confrontation (Mk does not even use the term *νόμος* once!). Jn does not present the clash between Jesus and the Jews the way he does merely to hold up the unbelief of the Jews as an "illustration" or "typification" (although he does this *also*) but because *this was the unbelief he was combatting in the passages we considered.*

We must therefore disagree with Grässer when he writes: "Zwar diskutiert Jesus mit den Juden. Aber die verhandelten Themata sind kaum *Fragen des jüdischen Horizontes* ..." <sup>116</sup> An example Grässer gives to support his assertion is that of Jn 8,12-20. He comments: "In einer wirklichen Diskussion (i.e., with Jews) wäre eine solche Argumentation unmöglich". Jn 8,12-20 has been dealt with in detail. We remarked that the mode of argumenting, which is also found at Jn 10,34-36 and Jn 5,37-40, is indeed singular. It is absolutely conclusive only if one accept the "petitio principii" Jn takes for granted; in other words: only in a context of faith. But the reasoning is Jewish and it is based on the Jewish attitude towards the Law!

What explanation can be afforded for this? With this question we come to the last point: the texts we have examined indicate that *Jn is writing for Jews who already believe or who are, at least, "hidden believers"—only indirectly is he writing to win over non-believing Jews.* Here we disagree with J. A. T. Robinson <sup>117</sup> and others <sup>118</sup> who believe that Jn was writing to win over non-believing Jews. The missionary purpose of Jn was rather to win over Jews who already believed "hiddenly", but were unwilling to break away from the Synagogue by openly confessing Jesus <sup>119</sup> (*perhaps* also to win back those who had fallen back into Judaism because of persecution).<sup>120</sup> Jn 5,41-44 and the texts examined in conjunction with it have

<sup>116</sup> *Art. cit.*, 182.

<sup>117</sup> *Art. cit.*, 124-125.

<sup>118</sup> Notably Bornhäuser (*op. cit.*) and van Unnik (*art. cit.*). For a conspectus of the different positions concerning the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel, cf. A. Wind, "Destination and Purpose of the Gospel of John", *NovT* 14 (1972) 26-69.

<sup>119</sup> Rightly Brown, LXXIII f.

<sup>120</sup> Guilding, *op. cit.*, advocates this. If this purpose was at all present, it is only because, to some extent, it necessarily follows upon the first.

furnished clear evidence of this. However, we believe that Jn's main purpose was to confirm Jewish-Christians in the faith.<sup>121</sup> He was countering Jewish attacks against Christian-Jews in order to prevent Jews from falling away and returning to the Synagogue.

The argument that Jn is writing in order to win over to the faith ("that you may believe" 20,31) does not speak against our view. The Jews who refused to confess Christ openly or who were not firmly established in the faith cannot be said to have believed in the full sense of the term. We have seen <sup>122</sup> that faith in Jn is a dynamic reality which cannot be equated with the initial act of faith.

## 2. JN 1,17

It is now possible to approach Jn 1,17, where the Law is in some way contrasted with or opposed to ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια, which are to be found in Jesus. An examination of this verse will allow us to specify more accurately the manner in which Jn views the relationship of the Law to Jesus. Bultmann has justly written <sup>123</sup> that the Prologue becomes clear only in the light of the whole Gospel. Such is certainly the case of v. 17, which would remain unintelligible were the reader not to have recourse to the rest of the Gospel in order to understand it. This holds good whether the Prologue is treated as an "overture",<sup>124</sup> as the regular beginning of the Gospel,<sup>125</sup> or as both.<sup>126</sup> Methodologically, we are therefore justified in not having considered Jn 1,17 earlier on in the dissertation.

The literature on the Prologue is already immense and it would be out of place to re-elaborate on problems which have been often and

<sup>121</sup> On this point we are in agreement with Mulder (*art. cit.*) and with those who had proposed this view before him (cf. Wind, *art. cit.*, 30-32).

<sup>122</sup> See above, pp. 412ff.

<sup>123</sup> Comm., 1.

<sup>124</sup> The definition is that of Bultmann (*ibid.*), who uses this term to describe the "merkwürdige Einführung". A Harnack ("Über das Verhältnis des Prologs des vierten Evangeliums zum ganzen Werk", *ZThK* 2 (1892) 189-231) had already considered the Prologue an introduction to the Gospel.

<sup>125</sup> So E. Haenchen, "Probleme des johanneischen 'Prologs'", *ZThK* 60 (1963) 305-334, 308; Schulz, 13.

<sup>126</sup> Schnackenburg, 199.

<sup>127</sup> We refer to A. Feuillet, *Le prologue du quatrième évangile* (Paris, 1968), for a good exposition of the various problems raised by the Prologue and the present state of research.

exhaustively discussed.<sup>127</sup> Certain positions will simply have to be taken for granted; the reader will be referred to the relevant literature for the substantiating evidence.

It is quite certain that, in composing the so-called Prologue, Jn made use of a hymn which was not of his own composition,<sup>128</sup> modifying and adapting it to suit his purpose. Most authors hold that v. 17 is one of the verses added to the hymn,<sup>129</sup> but opinions are divided as to whether vv. 14.16, which v. 17 is meant to clarify, belonged to the primitive hymn or not.<sup>130</sup> Most authors further agree that v. 17 was added *by the evangelist*,<sup>131</sup> even though M.-E. Bois-

<sup>128</sup> The consensus is not unanimous. Some authors, such as H. Ridderbos ("The Structure and Scope of the Prologue to the Gospel of John", *NovT* 8 (1966) 180-201), W. Eltester ("Der Logos und sein Prophet", in: *Apophoreta*, Festschr. E. Haenchen (Berlin, 1964), 109-134) and P. Lamarche ("Le Prologue de Jean", *RSR* 52 (1964) 497-537), refuse to consider the Prologue a composite and deny the existence of a pre-existent unit. Others, such as A. Wickenhauser (*Das Evangelium nach Johannes* (Regensburg, 1957)), S. De Aulsebrook ("Es un himno a Cristo el prólogo de San Juan?" *EstB* 15 (1956) 223-277, 381-427) and C. Cryer ("The Prologue of the Fourth Gospel", *ExpTim* 32 (1920-21) 440-443) speak of a primitive hymn composed by Jn himself and later used to compose the Prologue. Notwithstanding such exceptions, we may say that, in recent years, exegetes are generally agreed that Jn did use a pre-existent hymn to compose the Prologue and that he himself did not write the pre-existent unit. Cf. Brown, 18-21; Schnackenburg, 200-207; Schulz, 15-17.

<sup>129</sup> Bultmann (53), Bernard (exlrv), C. Masson ("Le prologue du quatrième évangile", *RTPPhil* 117 (1940) 297-311), Käsemann ("Aufbau und Anliegen des johanneischen Prologs", in: *Libertas Christiana*, Festschr. F. Delekat (München, 1957), 75-99, 97), Schnackenburg (205—also: "Logos-Hymnus und johanneischer Prolog", *BZ* 1 (1957) 69-109, 74), Schulz (ad loc.—also: *op. cit.*, 26), Brown (16; 35); H. C. Green ("The Composition of St. John's Prologue", *ExpTim* 66 (1954-55) 291-294, 293), Jeremias (*TWNT* IV, 877, n. 254), Wickenhauser (39), De Aulsebrook (*art. cit.*, 423f), M.-E. Boismard ("Saint Luc et la rédaction du quatrième évangile (Jn 4,46-54)", *RB* 69 (1962) 185-211, 206-210), C. Demke (*Der Prolog des Johannesevangeliums* (Stuttgart, 1967), 65f) and G. Richter ("Die Fleischwerdung des Logos im Johannesevangelium", *NovT* 13 (1971) 81-126, 107) all hold that v. 17 was added to the hymn, whatever may have been its nature and origin. Again there are exceptions. Feuillet (*op. cit.*, 201) sees no "raison décisive de retrancher de l'hymne primitif les vv. 17 et 18". Haenchen (*art. cit.*, 323f) attributes v. 17 to the hymn because the opposition between the Law of Moses and the grace and truth which have come to be in Jesus is foreign to the Gospel (*ibid.*, 311, n. 36). Cryer (*art. cit.*, 443), who also considers vv. 17f part of the hymn, is forced to admit that they "seem to have experienced some change and expansion".

<sup>130</sup> Cf. Richter, *art. cit.*, 94-96. Richter, following Käsemann (*art. cit.*) and Demke (*art. cit.*), holds that vv. 14-18 were added to the primitive hymn.

<sup>131</sup> All the authors who consider v. 17 an addition to the hymn (see n. 129) attribute it to Jn, with the exception of Boismard (see n. 132), Richter (see n. 133) and Demke.

mard<sup>132</sup> and G. Richter<sup>133</sup> would attribute it (as an integral part of vv. 14-18) to the redactor of the Gospel. We adopt the view that v. 17 was added by the evangelist (Jn)<sup>134</sup> to the hymn he used and which already contained vv. 14.16.<sup>135</sup> We wish to point out, however, that, even if vv. 14.16 were also added by Jn (as Käsemann believes), this would not invalidate the explanation we will give of our verse.<sup>136</sup>

If, as we suspect, v. 17 is a Johannine addition, it is clear that the thought contained in this verse was of such interest to the evangelist that it induced him to make an addition to the primitive text he was using.<sup>137</sup> It is not surprising that Jn should have wished to allude in in the Prologue to what was to have such an important place in his Gospel.

The ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια of v. 17, it is commonly admitted, takes up the πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας of v. 14 and the χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος of v. 16. V. 17 thus appears as a gloss which wishes to

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Demke (*art. cit.*, 65f) believes that v. 17 was added by Jn to the hymn, but that he received this verse from tradition.

<sup>132</sup> Boismard (*art. cit.*, 190, 206-210) attributes vv. 14-18 to the redactor (Luke).

<sup>133</sup> Richter (*art. cit.*, 101ff) attributes v. 17 to the redactor of the Fourth Gospel and his "vom Zweck des ursprünglichen Evangeliums abweichende antidoketische Tendenz" (103).

<sup>134</sup> Both Bultmann (53) and, even more so, Schnackenburg (205) remark that v. 17 presents an antithesis which can hardly be explained if v. 17 is taken as belonging to the hymn: "... die Schärfe in der Gegenüberstellung mit Moses scheint doch nicht sehr für V 17 als Abschluss des Hymnus zu sprechen, und die Namensnennung kann auch gut auf das Konto des Evangelisten gehen (vgl. 17,3)". Schnackenburg also writes that the hymn uses the OT realities in a "positive", "typological" sense—which contrasts with the "antithetical" nature of v. 17. See what is said below on this.

<sup>135</sup> On the whole, we find the reconstruction of Schnackenburg (*art. cit.*) rather convincing. Vv. 1.3.4.9.10.11.14.16 are free from the Johannine "Stileigentümlichkeiten" individuated by Schweizer and Ruckstuhl (with the exception of the "Wiederaufnahme" in vv. 1.4.10(?).11(?)), whereas the remaining verses all contain such characteristics. Furthermore, there are a number of theological terms in the "hymn" (as reconstructed by Schnackenburg) which are not current in the rest of the Gospel. The concurrence of these two factors seems to indicate both the existence of a primitive "hymn" and that it was not composed by the evangelist. This last point, however, is less certain. See the criticism of Feuillet (*op. cit.*, 196) to Schnackenburg's literary criteria.

<sup>136</sup> The same can be said were one to adopt the view of those who hold that v. 17 is not an addition of Jn, but belonged to the primitive hymn. In this case, as Grässer (*art. cit.*, 78) has rightly remarked, the fact that Jn saw fit to incorporate it into his Gospel is "Beweis genug, dass dieser Vers zumindest seiner eigenen Überzeugung nicht widersprach".

<sup>137</sup> Whether it was composed by Jn or by another is of little consequence.



explain or clarify the preceding affirmations concerning the *χάρις* and the *ἀλήθεια* which are to be found in Jesus. The *ὅτι* is casual and explains both vv. 14 and 16.

Vv. 14.16 (v. 15 is an addition which disturbs the sequence) have just said that the Logos became flesh and that the only Son (become flesh) is *πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας* because we have all received <sup>138</sup> *ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ ... χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος*. At this point Jn feels the need of specifying that, if we have received from the fulness of him who is full of *χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας* as the *μονογενής*, it is because they came to be through Jesus and not through the Law.

What is the nature of the contrast Jn is drawing? <sup>139</sup> Does v. 17 present an antithetical parallelism (there is no *χάρις καὶ ἀλήθεια* in the Law, but only in Jesus), a synthetical parallelism (*ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια*, already to be found in the Law, are found in their plenitude in Jesus), or both (the *χάρις καὶ ἀλήθεια* found in Jesus is incomparably superior to that found in the Law—there is therefore a certain antithesis between Jesus and the Law)? If one limits oneself to Jn 1,17, there is no way of deciding which is to be preferred (although the text speaks in favour of an antithetical parallelism—see below). It is precisely at this point that one should question the rest of the Gospel. The term *χάρις* is found only in the Prologue; the body of the Gospel is consequently of little direct assistance here. It is advisable to begin with *ἀλήθεια*.

'*Αλήθεια*, we have seen,<sup>140</sup> is a term of revelation. It indicates the divine mystery revealed in Jesus. Jesus reveals God the Father by revealing himself as Son. When Jesus is accepted as the Son of God,

<sup>138</sup> It is possible that the *χάρις ἀντὶ χάριτος* means "love in the place of love"—the New Covenant being contrasted with the Old Covenant, in the hymn. This would be an added reason why Jn should have added v. 17 and emphasized the antithesis (see below) between the Old and the New Covenant. But it is equally probable that it means "grace upon grace"—an accumulation of graces.

<sup>139</sup> The question is whether Jn is establishing an *opposition* (antithesis) or a line of continuity (synthesis) between the Law and Jesus. Bultmann (ad loc.), Dodd (*Interpretation*, 82), Lagrange (ad 1,17.18), Hoskyns (ad loc.), Zahn (ad loc.), interpret in the sense of opposition (grace and truth were (are?) not to be found in the Law, but in Jesus); Loisy (193), Jeremias (*TWNT* IV, 877), Brown (16, ad loc.), Feuillet (*op. cit.*, 125) speak of "continuity"—what was to be found in the Law is now found in an eminent degree in Jesus. Schnackenburg will both have his cake and eat it—he believes the contrast is antithetical, but that it is not absolute (205). Feuillet, quoting Calmes, also observes (*op. cit.*, 126) that the "gradation" implies "une certaine antithèse".

<sup>140</sup> See above, pp. 92ff.

equal to the Father, whom the Father has sent into the world in order that the world be saved, one grasps the mystery of God's salvific will, expressed and realized in the salvific "work" entrusted and brought to perfection in Jesus and appropriated by man in faith (which is also a "work" of God, although it is, at the same time, a "work" man works). All through the Gospel Jn insists that Jesus is "the way, the truth and the life", that salvation is impossible unless one accept Jesus as such and thus find "the way, the truth and the life" in him. Jesus is the one who is "truthful", who speaks the "truth" he has heard from the Father. By becoming his disciple, man discovers the "truth" which sets free from the slavery of sin and death. Eternal life is to come to know the one and only God and the one whom he has sent, Jesus Christ (17,3), to be sanctified in the "truth" which is the "word of God" present in the Word (17,17). In other words: "truth" in Jn is not merely revelation, but revelation in its christological and eschatological dimension: the revelation given by Christ in the fulness of time.

The christological and eschatological nature of "truth" in Jn is particularly evident in those sections which speak of Jesus' teaching as the manifestation of the "truth" (of Jesus speaking the "truth") and of Jesus himself as being "truthful" (viz., as being the "truth"). Especially worthy of notice is Jn 7,14-18 and 7,18 in particular. The text has been considered in the section which deals with the teaching of Jesus<sup>141</sup> and was related to Jn 7,45-49; 9,24-34; 8,44ff and 18,19-24. Attention was drawn to the fact that the "truth" of Jesus' teaching was being contrasted with traditional Jewish teaching and presented in such a way as to indicate that the teaching of Jesus is not opposed to that of Moses, but is not subordinated to it or to the tradition which goes back to Moses. The teaching of Jesus, the "truth" he proclaims, is something absolutely new and unique, not to be found in the writings of Moses. Jesus is taught directly by God and proclaims the "truth" he has heard from the Father as the only begotten. His teaching-revelation is not at the service of the Law, but rather the other way around. The Law should lead to the acceptance of the teaching of Jesus, which goes beyond the Law (cf. our exegesis of Jn 7,17.19.51; 5,37-39.45-47; 6,45 and 1,45).

The contrast of Jn 1,17 is all the more interesting in that, as has

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<sup>141</sup> See above, pp. 87ff.

been pointed out,<sup>142</sup> the "truth" was associated with the Law in the OT, in Qumran and in the Apocalyptic literature. We suggested that Jn was inferring that the "truth" is not to be found in the Law, but in Jesus. Just as the Law cannot give life, is not the true bread the Father gives, is not the water of life nor the light of life, so too is it not the "truth". The function of the Law (viz., the Scriptures) is reduced to that of leading men to recognize the "truth" in Jesus—it has a purely prophetic or pedagogical function.

It was also mentioned that Jn would probably not deny that God spoke to Moses, that the Israelites of old saw God's form and heard his voice, that the Law was authentic divine revelation to the Israel of old. However, Jn does not consider what the Law or the Scriptures represented before Christ's coming. For him their value is that of the providential means used by God in order to lead the Jews, who did not prove indocile, to Jesus. But to say that the Law or the Scriptures are given by God in order to lead to Jesus is not to say that they contain the truth or life *in themselves*. Such was precisely the attitude of the Synagogue towards the Law (cf. Jn 5,39!) and it is the dogmatics of the Synagogue which Jn is counteracting when he says that the "truth" and the "life" are to be found in Jesus, not in the Law. The Law for Jn could only be said to contain "truth" and "life" in an improper sense: insofar as it leads to Jesus, who is the truth and the life. With the coming of Christ (and Jn is concerned only with this), "life" is possible for man only if he accepts the teaching of Jesus, the "truth" he proclaims (viz., the "truth" he is). It is of no avail to search the Scriptures in the hope of finding life in them—one must come to Jesus (5,39). Jn could likewise have said: it is of no avail to search the Scriptures (viz., the Law) in the hope of finding the "truth" in them, it is to be found only in Jesus.

In mentioning the various interpretations given to Jn 1,17—that the verse is to be understood as establishing a parallelism, which is either antithetical or synthetical—we affirmed that the matter cannot be decided on the basis of v. 17 alone. In our estimation, however, to affirm that the parallelism is synthetical and not antithetical is to disregard the fact that God is said to have given the Law through Moses, but that ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια are said to have come to be through Jesus. If the words are taken at their face value, one must hold that Jn in no way implies that ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια also came

<sup>142</sup> See above, pp. 95ff.

to be through the Law. The authors who understand the parallelism as synthetical are moved to do so on the assumption that the Law too was divine revelation, as is indicated by the passive ἐδόθη, which implies that it is God who gave the Law through Moses. Moreover, in the Jewish tradition **חַסֵּד וְאֱמֶת**, which are no doubt behind the *χάρις καὶ ἀλήθεια* of v. 14, were associated with the Covenant and with the Law. Would Jn be denying what is so often affirmed in the OT?

Such an approach to Jn 1,17, to our mind, should be avoided for the reasons given above. Jn is not concerned with the value of the Law as divine revelation, as expression of God's **חַסֵּד וְאֱמֶת**, *before Christ's coming*—he sees Jesus as the fulness of *χάρις καὶ ἀλήθεια* and denies that they are now to be found in the Law, *as the Jews with whom he is disputing would have it*.

Such an attitude towards the Law corresponds to the peculiar manner in which Jn looks upon history, which has been excellently described by N. A. Dahl :

“The consistent Christocentricity of the Fourth Gospel does not exclude a sense of historical continuity, going backwards from the Church Universal to the first disciples ... and farther back to those who believed and bore witness to him before his incarnation. In this sense, even John is aware of a ‘history of salvation’ ... John is not a historian telling about the past and trying to find cause and effects. Neither is he a theologian of Heilsgeschichte, seeing a series of redemptive acts of God in history. ... All his (historical) material the author interprets in order to make it serve his own purpose, to bear witness to Christ. ... The question may remain as to whether the Old Testament is not, factually, deprived of a historical meaning of its own, when Moses and the prophets “(we would say : and the Law)” are simply made supporters of John’s own testimony to Christ. But basically, John shares the Old Testament faith in God, the Creator, who acts in history and is, accordingly, not an unknown God to be reached by a mystical escape from history. The continuity between Israel and the church is understood in a peculiar way, but is not dissolved”.<sup>143</sup>

The fact that Jn does not reflect upon “die Weltzeit vor der Offenbarung” (in Jesus) does not mean that revelation for him has no historical dimension, as L. Schottroff maintains.<sup>144</sup> Nor is it possible to affirm that “die johanneische Einstellung gegenüber dem AT ist grundsätzlich gleichartig mit der der meisten gnostischen Systeme,

<sup>143</sup> *Art. cit.*, 140-142.

<sup>144</sup> *Op. cit.*, 233.

deren Allegoresen H. Jonas zutreffend charakterisiert: 'demonstrative Umkehrung von Sinn—und Wertverhältnissen' ".<sup>145</sup>

L. J. Kuypers<sup>146</sup> draws attention to the absence of the word *χάρις* in the body of the Gospel, as opposed to *ἀλήθεια*, which is used quite frequently. We agree that the word *χάρις* is abandoned by Jn "because he intends to let the word truth carry the full import of the concept within the expression, grace and truth",<sup>147</sup> but Kuypers has failed to see why.

Jn was using a pre-existent hymn which spoke of the Word becoming flesh and being full of *χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας* in terms which, if one accepts the position of Boismard shared also by Schnackenburg (see below), recalled the events of Sinai (vv. 14.16). *Χάρις* was mentioned in both vv. 14 and 16. In adding v. 17 Jn did not see fit to omit *χάρις*; he takes up the same expression used at v. 14. Jesus was full of grace and truth—Jn now says that grace and truth came to be through Jesus, only the Law was given through Moses. But, for Jn, it is "truth" which bears the weight of the contrast he establishes between Moses and Jesus, as is illustrated by the rest of the Gospel. God spoke to Moses and gave the Law through him, *he revealed himself in Jesus*.

The suggestion of G. Kittel,<sup>148</sup> according to which the opposition in v. 17 is between the Logos and the νόμος, seems convincing to the writer. Although J. Starcky<sup>149</sup> is correct in saying that the opposition in v. 17 is between *ὁ νόμος* and *ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια* rather than *ὁ νόμος* and *ὁ Λόγος* (as Kittel would have it), one should recall that the "truth" Jesus proclaims is his word and, in the Prologue, he is identified with his word as the Word. Starcky objects against Kittel that v. 17 is a parenthesis. Yet this point favours rather than opposes Kittel's hypothesis: the Word was said to be full of grace and truth, Jn takes the same formulation as in v. 14 (which explains why he did not omit the *χάρις*) in order to make clear that the grace and truth are to be found in the Logos incarnate and not in the Law. Such a view explains the appearance of *χάρις* in v. 17 (which we

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 241, n. 2.

<sup>146</sup> L. J. Kuypers, "Grace and Truth. An Old Testament Description of God and Its Use in the Johannine Gospel", *Interpr* 18 (1964) 3-19.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>148</sup> *TWNT* IV, 138.

<sup>149</sup> *DBS* V, art. "Logos", 495.

considered Johannine) and its absence in the rest of the Gospel.<sup>150</sup> Jn is opposing the Law and Jesus on the basis of their claim to being the expression of divine revelation. He concludes that "truth" (like "life") is to be found in Jesus and not in the Law.

In an earlier work,<sup>151</sup> M.-E. Boismard suggested that vv. 14-18 (which he then believed belonged to the hymn composed by Jn) present the Incarnation in terms which recall the Sinai events. Just as Jn, at 5,37-40, explains how the OT revelation and the Scriptures have value only in Jesus and are only meant to lead to him, so too would he be indicating at 1,14-18 that, with the coming of Jesus, the era of "grace and truth" has dawned for man and has replaced the Old Dispensation. The interpretation of v. 17 would remain that which we have proposed. Yet, without denying that the Sinai events may be behind vv. 14-18, we maintain that v. 17 is an addition of the evangelist and not the conclusion of the primitive hymn.<sup>152</sup>

To say that Jesus and the grace and truth which are found in him have replaced the Law, does not mean to say that Jesus is the new Law. To say that Jesus "ist selbst Thora, neue Thora" <sup>153</sup> is to make Jn say something he did not want to say. We trust that our analysis of the "nomistic termini" Jn uses and the way in which he uses them showed that Jn did not want to present the "work" of Jesus as giving origin to a new Law. The "Law" is a concept which is too laden with overtones for the Jewish adversaries of Jn to allow for any such thing (the Law is "their" Law!). The revelation of Jesus replaces the Torah—the new reality is prepared for by the old, but goes so far beyond it that Jn hesitates to speak of it as a "new Law".

Goppelt is much closer to Jn than Kittel when he writes :

"An die Stelle all dieser Einrichtungen der vergangenen Heilsgeschichte treten nicht andere, verbesserte Einrichtungen, sondern das eine Neue, Christus und die in ihm beschlossene neue Schöpfung. ... So ist auch das 'neue Gebot' ... nicht ein 'neues Gesetz', sondern Ausdruck der nur in der *καινή κτίσις* möglichen Verbundenheit, welche Gott, Christus und die Seinen in einer Lebensgemeinschaft eint ..." <sup>154</sup>

<sup>150</sup> One could ask what meaning Jn wished to give to the *χάρις* he retained. We suggest that he was thinking of Jesus as the manifestation of God's *love* for the world (cf. 3,16f).

<sup>151</sup> *Le Prologue de saint Jean* (Paris, 1953), 68-72, 75-78, 85-87.

<sup>152</sup> In the same sense, Schnackenburg, 204f. See above, n. 134.

<sup>153</sup> Kittel, *TWNT* IV, 139, 10; Boismard (*op. cit.*, 126) makes a similar statement.

<sup>154</sup> *Typos*, 232.

Jn presents Jesus and his "work" as the "Heilsgabe Gottes" pure and simple. It should be noted once again that Jn does not speak of Jesus as the fulfilment of the Law, but as the fulfilment of the Scriptures. The Law is reduced to the Scriptures (probably as a result of the emphasis placed by the Pharisees on oral tradition) and the Scriptures themselves are considered in their strictly "prophetic" function. One can speak of the fulfilment of the Law only if the reservation Jn makes is maintained, if the Law itself is seen not as the Law of the Jews, but as it manifests itself to Christians. In this sense the work and death of Jesus fulfill the Law (cf. 19,7 in the exegesis proposed above!) and in this sense there is an element of continuity between the Law given through Moses and the *χάρις καὶ ἀλήθεια* which came to be through Jesus Christ.

Before closing this section, a few words must be said about the possibility that the Prologue as a whole may be contrasting the *Λόγος* (Jesus) with the *νόμος*. We are dealing with a mere possibility, but with one which deserves serious consideration.

According to Bornhäuser<sup>155</sup> and Kittel,<sup>156</sup> the background of the Logos, as used in the Prologue, is that of Rabbinical speculation concerning the Torah. The list of parallels between the attributes ascribed to the Torah by the Rabbis and those ascribed to the Logos by Jn is impressive.<sup>157</sup> The Prologue would be contrasting the Logos and the Torah: "Deshalb ist die Fleischwerdung des 'logos' geschehen, dass an Ihm die Antithese zu der Thora der Juden sichtbar werde".<sup>158</sup>

The opinion of Kittel (and Bornhäuser) has rallied the support of such scholars as J. Dupont,<sup>159</sup> S. Lyonnet,<sup>160</sup> Boismard,<sup>161</sup> and W. F. Howard,<sup>162</sup> while others (notably J. Starcky)<sup>163</sup> refuse to make of the "Thorologie" the background of the Prologue and to explain the Logos in terms of the Law. Feuillet<sup>164</sup> is no doubt right when

<sup>155</sup> *Op. cit.*, 5-14.

<sup>156</sup> *TWNT* IV, 139.

<sup>157</sup> The relevant texts are quoted by *Str.-Bill.*, II, 353ff; cf. also Kittel, *TWNT* IV, 139.

<sup>158</sup> Kittel, *ibid.*, 138, 30f.

<sup>159</sup> *Essais sur la christologie de S. Jean* (Bruges, 1951), 42.

<sup>160</sup> *Bib* 26 (1945) 126-131, 130f.

<sup>161</sup> *Op. cit.*, 125f.

<sup>162</sup> *Christianity according to St. John* (London, 1952), 49-51.

<sup>163</sup> *Art. cit.*, 495.

<sup>164</sup> *Op. cit.*, 247.

he writes that the late date of the Rabbinical texts in question “rend malaisée une conclusion ferme” concerning the possibility that the Torah had already been personified and considered pre-existent before the Prologue was written.

Rabbinical speculation on the Torah offers analogies which are no more striking than those found in the Jewish Wisdom literature.<sup>165</sup> The parallels here are just as impressive and the substitution of *λόγος* to *σοφία* can easily be explained.<sup>166</sup> It is no wonder that many exegetes should consider the Logos title and the hymn in the Prologue against the background of the Wisdom literature. To our mind it is exaggerated to affirm, with Kittel, that the “Thorologie” exercised the decisive influence on the Prologue and that the Wisdom current played a subordinate role—exercising an influence only through the mediation of the Law. The contacts between the Prologue and the Wisdom literature are too numerous and too direct to allow for such a view.<sup>167</sup> But it would be equally wrong to believe that, if the hymn is thinking in terms of personified Wisdom and is praising Christ as the true incarnation of Wisdom, this excludes a direct reference to the Law. Haenchen, who has made a valuable contribution to clarifying the background of the Prologue,<sup>168</sup> speaks of the myth of Wisdom not finding reception among men as the basis of the hymn Jn used. But this author does not fail to point out that, in later Judaism, Wisdom had been said to have found an abode in Israel in the form of the Law.<sup>169</sup>

This important factor of the identification between Wisdom and the Law, which already goes back to the OT, should be coupled with another factor which is not less important, but which is often disregarded : the identification of the *λόγος* of God with both Wisdom and the Law in the OT. The OT notion of the “word” has been proposed

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<sup>165</sup> The contacts between the Prologue and the Wisdom current have been repeatedly stressed by exegetes. The Wisdom background of the Prologue (and of the Gospel as a whole) has been carefully worked out by Sidebottom, *op. cit.*, 33-37. For the numerous parallels between the Prologue and Wisdom literature, see also Schulz, *op. cit.*, 31-34; Dodd, *Interpretation*, 274f.

<sup>166</sup> Cf. Feuillet, *op. cit.*, 243-244.

<sup>167</sup> Cf. C. Spicq, “Le Siracide et la structure littéraire du prologue de saint Jean”, in : *Memorial Lagrange* (Paris, 1940), 183-195.

<sup>168</sup> *Art. cit.*

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 313, comp. 321.



as the source of the Johannine Logos by OT scholars.<sup>170</sup> In reviewing the nature of the "word" in the OT, one must not only recall its dynamism, its creative and salvific power, its revelatory nature and its quasi-hypostatic character (Is 55,10-11), but mention that it is also—and historically is *primarily*—the "legal" word: the Law.<sup>171</sup> When due attention is paid to this aspect of the "word" we are only one step away from the Johannine Logos <sup>172</sup> because the "word" in the OT is the Law, the Law is Wisdom and Wisdom is personified, pre-existent, etc. One need not have recourse to Rabbinical texts (although they probably represent a development already present in the Prologue) to explain the possible contrast between the Logos and the νόμος.

It is for this reason that Dodd can say that "the author (of the Prologue) started from the Jewish idea of the Torah as being at once the Word of God and the divine Wisdom manifested in creation, and found, under the guidance of Hellenistic Jewish thought similar to that of Philo, an appropriate Greek expression which fittingly combined both ideas".<sup>173</sup> Although the identification of the Torah with the Word of God and divine Wisdom may not be sufficient of itself to explain the origin of the Logos-hymn, it would seem that "der joh. Logos-Hymnus steht im ganzen dem jüdisch-urchristlichen Denken viel näher als dem gnostischen ..." <sup>174</sup>

If the interpretation we have proposed (and which would deserve a much more elaborate development) is exact, one need not affirm, with Schnackenburg,<sup>175</sup> that the author of the hymn took his

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<sup>170</sup> "Most Old Testament scholars, I think, wonder why anyone has ever thought it necessary to appeal to any source beyond the OT to explain John's application of "logos" to Jesus Christ". J. L. McKenzie, *art. cit.*, *TS* 21 (1960) 183-206, 205. The author quotes Eichrodt, *Theol.*, II, 37f.

<sup>171</sup> Vs. Feuillet (*op. cit.*, 225-236), who overlooks this aspect.

<sup>172</sup> Cazelles (an OT scholar!) writes: "Le c. XXIV de l'Ecclesiastique ... avait identifié Loi et Sagesse, mais non pas Sagesse et Parole. Ce terme, pourtant, avait été l'un des premiers à désigner dans la Bible la révélation surnaturelle de la volonté divine ... et au v. 3 de ce même chapitre de l'Ecclesiastique, la Sagesse ne se présentait-elle pas comme "sortie de la bouche du Très-Haut?" On comprend que S. Jean ait choisi ce terme de 'parole' pour faire comprendre aux hommes la présence désormais permanente parmi eux de la source de vie ... la Loi, par un retour à ses origines, a acquis toute sa vitalité en s'effaçant derrière le Christ, Verbe de Dieu". *DBS* V, 527f.

<sup>173</sup> *Interpretation*, 278.

<sup>174</sup> Schnackenburg, 269.

<sup>175</sup> *Comm.*, 204.

inspiration from two distinct theological "Models": he described the Logos in terms of Wisdom until it came to describing the Incarnation; here (vv. 14.16) he had recourse to the "Sinaigeschehen". All through the hymn Jesus is being praised in terms which recall not only divine Wisdom, but also the Law. One can gather from v. 17 that this idea was already present in the hymn (or at least was so understood by the evangelist), since he thought it opportune to specify further by drawing an explicit contrast between Jesus and Moses, between the Law and the "revelation" given in Jesus Christ.

"The evangelist ... writes ... with the intention of exhibiting the revelation in Christ as offering in reality that which Judaism meant to offer, but failed to provide—a genuine knowledge of God conveying life to men. ... The Law ... stands over against the true revelation of God. It claims to be, but is not, the divine Wisdom, the light of the world, the life of men. Divine Wisdom is incarnate in Jesus Christ, in whom is the *πλήρωμα* of grace and truth".<sup>176</sup>

As a general conclusion to our lengthy investigation into the role and meaning of the Law in the Fourth Gospel, we must say that the opinion of Bultmann, according to which "... der Begriff νόμος im 4. Evangelium eine auffallend geringe Rolle spielt",<sup>177</sup> is a misrepresentation. On the contrary, one must affirm with Kittel that, for Jn, "das Verhältnis 'Christus/Gesetz' ... eine Grundfrage seines ganzen Evangeliums (ist)".<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> Dodd, *Interpretation*, 86.

<sup>177</sup> *Art. cit.*, *EvTheol* 4 (1937), 128.

<sup>178</sup> Kittel, *TWNT* IV, 138, 29f.

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